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CONTENTS

12 DECEMBER RUSSIAN ELECTIONS

Official, Regional Reaction

Yeltsin Holds News Conference on Vote Results 1
Delivers Opening Statement *[Moscow TV]* 1
Answers Questions *[Moscow TV]* 2
TV Interviews Officials on Elections *[Russian TV]* 8
Tatar Speaker Seen Ignoring Zhirinovskiy Threat *[IZVESTIYA 21 Dec]* 9

Party, Other Reaction

Zhirinovsky Pledges Support for Former Military *[BNS]* 10
Views Japan, Germany, 'Outlying Districts' *[INTERFAX]* 10
Calls For 'Union With Germany' *[Berlin DDP]* 11
Notes Readiness To Meet Clinton *[ITAR-TASS]* 11
Hails Saddam Husayn's Leadership *[Baghdad Radio]* 11
Background, Statements Viewed *[Zagreb GLOBUS 17 Dec]* 11
Chubays, Gaydar, Others Discuss Election Results *[Moscow TV]* 14
Russia's Choice Figure Views Democrats' Tasks *[ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI 18 Dec]* 16
Burbulis Wants Constitution 'Intact,' Yeltsin Until '96 *[INTERFAX]* 17
PRUA Spokesman Views Possible Party Agreements *[ITAR-TASS]* 17
Stankevich Sees 'No Future' for Zhirinovskiy *[Paris LE QUOTIDIEN DE PARIS 21 Dec]* 18
Borovoy, Doctors Accuse LDPR of 'Political Hypnosis' *[KOMMERSANT-DAILY 21 Dec]* 19
More on Claims *[ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI 22 Dec]* 19
Bolshevik Party Calls For 'Anti-Fascist Front' *[AFP]* 20
Smolensk TV Company Accused of Pro-Russia's Choice Bias *[PRAVDA 22 Dec]* 20

International Reaction

Postpoll 'Shifts' Discernible in U.S. Policy *[IZVESTIYA 22 Dec]* 21
Experts See Country as Disquieting in East Europe *[KOMMERSANT-DAILY 21 Dec]* 21
Japanese Paper Says Zhirinovskiy Funded by German Party *[IZVESTIYA 21 Dec]* 22
Ukrainians Assess Elections, Set Goals *[MOLOD UKRAYINY 17 Dec]* 23
Belarus Servicemen Issue Appeal Over Zhirinovskiy *[RID]* 23
Lithuania's Slezevicius Concerned by Results *[ITAR-TASS]* 23
Brazauskas, Envoys Comment *[Vilnius Internaitonal]* 24

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

U.S., Ukraine, Russia To Sign Tripartite Nuclear Accord *[Moscow TV]* 25
Burbulis Attends International Conference on Europe *[ITAR-TASS]* 25
Cooperation With EU Discussed *[INTERFAX]* 25
Former Bloc Countries' Communications Chiefs Meet *[ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA 21 Dec]* 25

INTERREGIONAL AFFAIRS

CIS Leaders To Hold Summit in Ashgabat 26
Agenda Released *[INTERFAX]* 26
CIS Secretary Comments *[INTERFAX]* 26
Russia's Shokhin on Payment Union *[ITAR-TASS]* 27
Russian Spokesman Cited *[INTERFAX]* 27
Kazakhstan's Missiles To Be Discussed *[IZVESTIYA 22 Dec]* 27
Kazakhstan's Nazarbayev Previews Session *[ITAR-TASS]* 28

Turkmenistan's Niyazov Notes Hopes *[INTERFAX]* 28
CIS Defense Ministers Open Session in Ashgabat *[ITAR-TASS]* 29
ITAR-TASS Carries Press Review for 21 Dec 29
Press Review for 22 Dec 30

RUSSIA INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

PRAVDA Says Gore Visit Went 'Largely Unnoticed' *[21 Dec]* 32
Kozyrev 'Dissatisified' with G-7 Cooperation *[INTERFAX]* 32
Foreign Ministry Spokesman Holds Briefing 33
Terms Unchanged for Latvian Pullout *[ITAR-TASS]* 33
UN Human Rights Commissioner Welcomed *[INTERFAX]* 33
Milosevic Victory in Serbian Elections Viewed *[IZVESTIYA 21 Dec]* 34

RUSSIA NATIONAL AFFAIRS

Political & Media Issues Issues

Yeltsin Signs Edict Abolishing Security Ministry *[ITAR-TASS]* 35
Golushko Appointed New Head *[ITAR-TASS]* 35
Stepashin Named Deputy *[ITAR-TASS]* 35
Presidential Spokesman Comments *[Radio Rossii]* 35
FIC Head Poltoranin To Step Down *[Moscow Radio]* 36
Resignation Not 'Unexpected' *[Radio Rossii]* 36
Filatov To Stay in President's Administration *[ITAR-TASS]* 36
Aleksandr Yakovlev Tipped as New Ostankino Chief *[ITAR-TASS]* 36
Yeltsin Preparing Edict on TV Reorganization *[Russian TV]* 36
Shumeyko Confirms Three New Media Bodies *[ITAR-TASS]* 36
Fedorov Dismisses Resignation Rumors *[ITAR-TASS]* 37
Reshuffles Among Top Brass Predicted; Candidates Tipped *[KOMMERSANT-DAILY 21 Dec]* 37
Yeltsin: Reforms May Acquire More 'Social Orientation' *[ITAR-TASS]* 38
Chernomyrdin Promises Funds for Science Research *[Russian TV]* 38
New Party To Represent 'Middle Class' Formed *[ITAR-TASS]* 38
'Sporting Russia' Party Elects Leader *[Moscow TV]* 39

Economic Issues

Yeltsin Signs Decree on Budget Deficit *[ITAR-TASS]* 39
Government Adopts Socioeconomic Program for Kurils *[INTERFAX]* 39
FITUR Head Rebukes Union Chiefs for Yeltsin Letter *[SEGODNYA 21 Dec]* 40
Continuing State Role in Core Enterprises Urged *[IZVESTIYA 21 Dec]* 40
Price Movements in Second Week of December Viewed *[IZVESTIYA 22 Dec]* 41
Conference Discusses Tax System Options *[ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA 21 Dec]* 41

Regional Affairs

Dudayev Appeals to Moldova To Help Iraq *[MOSKOVSKIY KOMSOMOLETS 19 Dec]* 42
Rossel Pledges To Revive Ural Republic *[KOMMERSANT-DAILY 21 Dec]* 42
New Tatarstan Party Draws Fire From Nationalists, Democrats
[KOMMERSANT-DAILY 21 Dec] 43
Borderland Regime Established in Kaliningrad *[YANTARNIY KRAY 14 Dec]* 43
'Oblast Duma' Created in Magadan *[Magadan Radio]* 44

UKRAINE

International Affairs

Deputy Foreign Minister Discusses Arms Trade *[Kiev Radio]* 45
Clarifies Missile Deactivation *[Kiev International]* 45
Zhirinovskiy Emissaries Meet Crimean Counterparts *[Kiev Radio]* 46
Assembly: Russia's BEC Membership 'Must Be Suspended' *[UKRAYINSKI OBRIYI Dec]* 46

Legal Aid, Consular Accord Signed With PRC *[Kiev International]* 46

National Affairs

Kravchuk: Current Situation Not To Affect Elections *[ITAR-TASS]* 46
Crimean Election Begins; 5 Candidates Registered *[IZVESTIYA 21 Dec]* 47
State Independence Party Withdraws From Election *[Kiev TV]* 47
Air Force, Antiaircraft Defense Merger Suspended *[UNIAN]* 47
Supreme Council Adopts Demonopolization Program *[ITAR-TASS]* 47
Further on 21 Dec Sitting *[UNIAN]* 48
Government Not To Introduce Hryvnya 'In Near Future' *[MOLOD UKRAYINY 17 Dec]* 48
New Association To Promote Free Economic Zone *[HOLOS UKRAYINY 17 Dec]* 48
Sevastopol Citizens Call For Action Against Crime *[Kiev Radio]* 49
Militia Official Presents Statistics on Crime *[UKRAYINA MOLODA 17 Dec]* 49

WESTERN REGION

Belarus

Shushkevich To Miss Summit for Health Reasons *[Radio Rossii]* 51
Accused of 'Faking' Hypertension *[INTERFAX]* 51
Supreme Soviet Meets, Discusses Economic Problems *[Moscow Radio]* 51
May Call Recess *[BELAPAN]* 52
General Estimates Army at 'About 92,000' *[INTERFAX]* 52
Servicemen Leader on Clash With Authorities *[DOBRY VECHAR 6 Dec]* 52
Industrialist Discusses Common CIS Oil Market *[DOBRY VECHAR 13 Dec]* 54
Private TV Channel To Operate in Minsk *[Minsk Radio]* 54

Moldova

Snegur Rejects 'Ultimatum' of Gagauz Republic *[Moscow Radio]* 54
Military Cooperation Planned With Belarus *[ITAR-TASS]* 54

CENTRAL ASIA

Tajikistan

Afghan President Rabbani Continues Talks in Dushanbe 55
Ends First Round of Talks *[INTERFAX]* 55
Seeks Rapprochement *[INTERFAX]* 55
Prolongs Visit for 'Technical Reasons' *[ITAR-TASS]* 55
Visits Science Academy, Meets Mufti *[Dushanbe Radio]* 55
Resignation of Prime Minister Abdullodzhanov Reviewed 55
Opposition Radio Views Dismissal *[Voice of Free Tajikistan]* 55
Voluntary Resignation Claimed *[INTERFAX]* 56
Reasons for Dismissal Analyzed *[NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA 21 Dec]* 57

Turkmenistan

President Niyazov on Ties With Russia, CIS *[IZVESTIYA 22 Dec]* 57

CAUCASUS

Armenia

Tension, Fighting Reported in Karabakh, Other Areas *[Yerevan Radio]* 59
President Signs Decrees on Religious Activity, Drugs *[Yerevan Radio]* 59
Presidential Edict Aids Private Food Importers *[INTERFAX]* 59
Economic Plight Seen Forcing Concessions *[NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA 21 Dec]* 60

Azerbaijan

President Aliyev Continues Talks in Paris *[Baku TV]* 61
Meets With Juppe *[ITAR-TASS]* 61
Holds News Conference *[ITAR-TASS]* 61
Armenia Said Pursuing Expansion To Gain Resources *[INTERFAX]* 61
Guliyev Sees 'Qualitative Changes' in Army *[INTERFAX]* 62
Battlefield Successes, Negotiation Efforts Pursued *[ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA 22 Dec]* 62
Guliyev, Gasanov Discuss Refugees, Ties With Iran *[Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI 7 Dec]* 63
Opposition Head Says Country Should Leave CIS *[SEGODNYA 21 Dec]* 64
Arrested Popular Front Members Fined, Released *[TURAN]* 64

Georgia

Russian Peacekeeping Offer Reportedly Rejected *[KURANTY 21 Dec]* 64
Mutual Recriminations Stall Talks With Abhazia *[NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA 21 Dec]* 65
'Experts' Present Results *[CONTACT INFORMATION AGENCY]* 65
Abkhazia's Ardzinba Seeks Removal of Sanctions *[INTERFAX]* 66
Ministry Criticizes ITAR-TASS Over Report *[Tbilisi Radio]* 66
Shevardnadze, Party Promise Aid to Entrepreneurs *[Tbilisi Radio]* 66
Russia To Supply Power, Cash To Ease Energy Crisis *[Tbilisi Radio]* 67
Shevardnadze Comments *[INTERFAX]* 67

BALTIC STATES

Estonia

Diplomat Predicts Suspension of Troop Withdrawal *[ETA NEWS BULLETIN]* 68
Arms Purchase Contract With Israel Ratified *[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA 21 Dec]* 68
Volunteers Accepted for Peacekeeping Battalion *[ETA NEWS BULLETIN]* 68

Lithuania

Prime Minister Slezevicius Arrives in Poland *[Vilnius Radio]* 68
Invites Pawlak, Kwasniewski *[Vilnius Radio]* 69
Jursenas Gives Polish Visit Positive Appraisal *[Warsaw PAP]* 69
Sees Need for Improving Relations *[BNS]* 69
Brazauskas Supports Oil Terminal With Latvians *[BNS]* 70
Project Deadline Faced *[BNS]* 70
Foreign Ministry Reviews Year's Events *[Vilnius Radio]* 70
President Addresses Diplomats' Meeting *[Vilnius Radio]* 71
Minister Karazija on Farmers' Strike, Demands *[TIESA 7 Dec]* 71

Official, Regional Reaction

Yeltsin Holds News Conference on Vote Results

Delivers Opening Statement

LD2212144093 Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian 1200 GMT 22 Dec 93

[Opening statement by President Boris Yeltsin at a news conference in Moscow—live]

[Text] Respected reporters, we are meeting at a moment which is difficult and at the same time significant for Russia. Only a few days ago there occurred an event whose importance is difficult to overestimate. It will have the most important consequences not only for the country but also, I am convinced, for the whole world.

By the vote of the whole people a new democratic constitution has been adopted. A final line has been drawn under the Soviet Communist regime. An important step has been taken into the future of our country and of our people.

I am profoundly grateful to the citizens of Russia for this. I am proud of this choice. The people have turned out to be wiser than many politicians and false prophets who prophesied the failure of the constitution. We have gained a strong lever for a peaceful and stable movement forward. We can look to tomorrow with more confidence. The Russian constitution is founded on the bedrock of freedom and rights of man, of the priority of the individual. We have been moving toward this moment through centuries of history. But ahead lies the most difficult task of creating conditions for the implementation of these rights. On 12 December we were able once more to see how difficult and contradictory the country's situation is. Under such conditions the most unexpected turns are possible, including the success of aggressive populist slogans.

It is all the more important that at this stage the country should have a firm constitutional basis. The constitution which has been adopted is one of the most important conditions for stability in Russia today. The Russian Constitution is one of change, a constitution which strengthens a united federative Russia. In addition, it consolidates the strategic course of Russian foreign policy.

But there is something else we must not forget. People also approved the referendum because they needed a more effective defense of their interests. I speak, above all, of the reforms. Now that the constitution has been adopted, the economic reforms must proceed in strict accordance with it. The state is obliged to observe those guarantees which have been secured by the constitution. For me, as president, this is a priority sphere.

We now have the legal framework for the new Russia. But all of us feel that this is not enough. The provisions of the constitution must be filled with a real content. Every constitutional norm, every principle, must find development in corresponding laws and legal acts. The creation of these is the task of the Federal Assembly—the Federation Council and the State Duma.

A few words about the elections. All in all, the results have been summed up. I hope you are aware of them. Naturally, in some respects they turned out to be unexpected, but I do not think it right to speak of them in tragic overtones; still less, to accuse the television and reporters of all the sins, in keeping with another tradition. Free, democratic, multiparty elections have taken place in Russia for the first time in many decades. International observers, 1,100 of them, have also acknowledged that.

Competing for seats in the Federal Assembly freely and openly were supporters of the course of reforms and its opponents. The electors expressed their will and gave their votes to those whom they trusted.

My opinion is that it is possible and necessary to work with parliament. Personally, I was not indeed expecting any hothouse conditions. At the same time there is no foundation for serious conclusions. Whoever the electors voted for, they were united in one thing: Russia needs strong rule. Russia needs order. People are exasperated with the amorphousness of rule. They are tired of the inconsistency and the half-baked solutions. They are indignant at the growth of crime.

The constitution provides the possibility of achieving order by legal, lawful means. The people's mandate for strengthening power has been obtained. As president, I will rely on it in full measure.

On 12 December we clearly saw that Russian democracy had not as yet grown out of its childhood. In the course of the election campaign everything manifested itself: both the lack of experience and the arrogance of some political leaders, and their unwillingness or inability to come to terms with reality. A fateful role was played by the diffuseness of the democratic forces. As before, there is an acute shortage of political experience, good manners, and the ability to see both the main priorities and the main dangers.

I am not mentioning this by way of reproaching anyone. This is our common problem. This is a problem facing Russia today, and we are obliged to tackle it together. I would very much like to see the democratic movement, the parties, and all those who consider themselves to be adherents of democracy assess themselves in a self-critical manner and discover in themselves the reasons for the relative failure of the democratic blocs. I am reckoning on the fact that in the Federal Assembly the forces of the reformers and democrats will be able to find mutual understanding and will attract into their orbit other deputies who, irrespective of their party affiliation, will work in the interests of their people. I am reckoning on the fact that the extreme slogans and excessive promises with which people were tempted during the election campaign will be discarded and that actual

requirements will be proportionate to the country's possibilities and our international obligations.

On 12 December the blocs representing the reform course received a critical assessment from the voters. I think that this assessment primarily applies to the manner in which the reforms are being carried out. The voters told the government in no uncertain terms: You are not doing a proper job with them. I think that at the present time the number one problem is improving the efficiency of the work done by the president's administration and the government. The standard of their work still does not correspond to our new possibilities and new tasks.

At the same time the population was not convinced by those reformers who relied solely on criticism of the government. They could have played a role in the actual work, by taking on responsibility, by taking the pulse, but they preferred to be onlookers. This disappointed the citizens of Russia. I feel that the people's reserves of tolerance are to a significant extent exhausted. They tightened their belts for two years. For two years they reconciled themselves to difficulties. Now, results are needed. It is untrue that the people of Russia naively believe that a miracle can take place, that everything will change in an instant. But they are entitled to ask in what respects life has changed for the better. And the state is obliged to respond to this with action.

I would like to say something else. Throughout the election campaign, wide use was made of demagogy, the propagation of primitive nationalism, outright lies, and even dangerous provocations. Unfortunately a considerable number of citizens are still too trustful of reckless promises. It is still too easy for blatant lies to obscure the truth.

I would say this to the question currently being asked as to whether the president will cooperate in the Federal Assembly with the opposition: I condemn any blatant or latent form of extremism, fascism, or aggressive nationalism. I shall resolutely dissociate myself from the odious provocative designs of extremists and will curtail them. But I shall not refuse dialogue with a constructive opposition if its proposals are directed toward the good of the country.

As president, I am obliged to interact with all the deputies, who were elected to the Federal Assembly by the people, on condition, of course, that they observe the constitution adopted by the people.

I am also drawing conclusions for myself. First, I believe that the channels through which information from independent experts reaches the president should be considerably extended. Weak spots have been identified here, and they should be promptly reinforced. Second, I see that the dialogue between the authorities and the people, society, and the state is extremely neglected. It should be set going as soon as possible. Third, an effective mechanism is needed for society to supervise the state. Now we have reached a state of affairs when a change in political style is needed. We need a different one, more open, and more understandable to people.

All in all, the whole of Russia craves stability. Russia needs peace. Russia wants to bring closer the time when our life starts to improve, and it is this that I will proceed from in my work, including my work with the newly elected parliament. Now let us go to the question time.

Answers Questions

LD2212152493 Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian 1213 GMT 22 Dec 93

[Question and answer session at news conference with President Boris Yeltsin and foreign and domestic correspondents, moderated by Press Secretary Vyacheslav Kostikov, in Moscow—live]

[Text] [Kostikov] INTERFAX, please, Mr. Grishchenko.

[Grishchenko] Boris Nikolayevich, you have just urged us in your statement not to consider the results of the parliamentary election in a tragic light. Do you agree with the allegations, now widespread, that democrats suffered nothing but a crushing defeat at these elections? Can one say this? Let me stress that these are the allegations.

[Yeltsin] No, I cannot agree with this view. The first thing is that the constitution was voted in. The democrats took part in it, did they not? Second, they gathered a sufficiently large number of votes. So the democrats succeeded here, too. Perhaps they did not gain first place, as had been expected, but nevertheless, together with territorial deputies, as it were, they will have a leading position among the parliament's factions.

[Kostikov] Ostankino.

[Unidentified correspondent] Nevertheless, Boris Nikolayevich, after what happened at the elections, are you not disappointed in democracy as a concept?

[Yeltsin] No, I am not and I am not disappointed in democracy as a concept. Maybe democrats were not up to the mark and did not act in unison in some ways, during the elections. These were the actions of young democrats. However, this is not democracy itself. Disappointment in democracy would be tantamount to total resignation.

[Kostikov] Nadzharov, please. [Indistinct voice at microphone] Please talk into the microphone.

[Nadzharov] Who will you nominate to the post of speaker at the first meeting of the new parliament?

[Yeltsin] Speaker of the State Duma?

[Nadzharov] Yes.

[Yeltsin] It is for the Council of Elders to determine who will be the speaker of the State Duma. So the Council of Elders will make a relevant decision.

[Kostikov] KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA, please.

[Unidentified correspondent] Boris Nikolayevich, do you intend to meet the leaders of such blocs as the LDP [Liberal Democratic Party] and others, for instance, Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, or Gennadiy Zyuganov?

[Yeltsin] I have had meetings with all those who participated in the election campaign, with leaders of the 13 blocs and parties. But that was prior to the elections. I think that we had a normal meeting. I will certainly be meeting leaders of factions and parties while the parliament works.

[Kostikov] I can see that there is a question from Sami 'Umar, our foreign colleague from Egypt. Please pass him the microphone.

['Umar] Boris Nikolayevich, in my view, the majority of citizens who voted for the Communist Party, Zhirinovskiy, or the Agrarian Party, voted primarily against the government's policy. At the same time, most of these people voted for the constitution, too, I think. How would you explain this paradox, Mr. President? Thank you.

[Yeltsin] I do not see this as a paradox. They see Russia's future in the constitution, and they are in favor of Russia's future and reforms, but at the same time they view the government's shortcomings in practical steps. They live in poverty today and this segment of people in distress, the poor, if I may say so, could vote for these parties.

[Kostikov] I have a question from a correspondent for LA STAMPA newspaper, Giuseppe Chiesa. He can read it out himself, or should I do it? Where is Giuseppe Chiesa of LA STAMPA?

[Chiesa] My question is this: In the West, there is widespread opinion that a broad section of the Russian population currently holds anti-West sentiments. Do you consider this interpretation justified, and, in general, what is your attitude toward relations between Russia and the West at this delicate moment?

[Yeltsin] You see, when preparations were under way for my visit to Japan, for example, our people were very closely watching how the president would behave himself in Japan. Would he give the Kurils back? That is the first point.

Second, from the viewpoint of relations with the United States, it is the same thing. We want to be equal in everything, as two great powers, and concessions in some areas have already demeaned the patriotic feelings of our Russian citizens, and that really is the case.

[Kostikov] The newspaper TRUD; Mr. Kishkin take the microphone, please.

[Kishkin] Boris Nikolayevich, a significant portion of the press, the West's and ours, has assessed the campaign slogans of Mr. Zhirinovskiy as neo-Nazi. Comparisons are being drawn between Germany in the 1930's and the current situation in Russia. What is your attitude toward such assessments, and what guarantees do you see that Russia will not develop according to the German scenario? Thank you.

[Yeltsin] Yes, some people are currently comparing the Germany of the 1930's with today's Russia. I believe that there are no grounds for this. True, there are some grounds such as hurt national feelings, unsteadiness, poor living conditions, the unsatisfactory living conditions of many people—these, of course, show some similarity. But the main thing that was absent in Germany, which we have, are a president and a constitution, which is on guard against fascism, and we will not permit anyone to get through with such ideas.

[Kostikov] The TASS agency, Mr. Sizov please.

[Sizov] Boris Nikolayevich, you have emphasized again today that you need to and must work with the new parliament. I ask you not to take my question as too head on, but still, do you accept the possibility of parliament being dissolved if it takes the path of irreconciable confrontation? Thank you.

[Yeltsin] Read the new constitution. I recommend that everyone read it. I cannot dissolve parliament, the State Duma, for a year. First of all, I do not have the right at all to dissolve the entire parliament, the entire parliament. Only the State Duma. And only under certain circumstances: Say, for instance, if debates begin between the government and parliament, the State Duma, and if on several occasions they are unable to reach agreement; then under those circumstances only. Therefore, I would not like to be and should not in any case be inclined toward such an eventuality. I think we should learn our lessons from the Supreme Soviet of the past, which could not in any way be called a parliament. Instead, there should be more work with parliament and more contact with all its factions.

[Kostikov] A question from the ASSOCIATED PRESS, Deborah Stuart, please.

[Stuart] Boris Nikolayevich, following the elections, Premier Chernomyrdin has said that he rules out more shock therapy. Do you share this opinion, or will you continue the Gaydar reform policy?

[Kostikov] Will there be no more shock therapy, will Gaydar's policy be pursued, or will there be some kind of adjustment?

[Yeltsin] Gaydar stays. So does the policy which he is pursuing, naturally along with the president and the government.

[Kostikov] Mayak radio station, Mr. Semenov, my colleague Semenov.

[Semenov] Boris Nikolayevich, there is too much talk about Zhirinovskiy; nevertheless, I would like to return to one aspect. In his pre-election utterances he said that he would like to lighten your presidential burden, that

you should stay quietly at Zavydovo, and that the government and parliamen. would do all the rest. Nonetheless, even after such utterances, are you prepared to cooperate with him? And in what form is this possible? Thank you. [Yeltsin] You see, we have heard Zhirinovskiy's words so far, what he has said during the election campaign. Let us wait for him and his party's deeds, their deeds in parliament, and only after that will we draw conclusions on how to cooperate with him. If he starts a constructive dialogue and works for the benefit of the country and the people who have elected him, then naturally we will cooperate and interact.

[Kostikov] Markov of the RIA Novosti agency.

[Markov] Boris Nikolayevich, to return to foreign policy again. You know that the world is very worried about the possible consequences of the success of Zhirinovskiy's party. What do you think? What will be the effect on foreign policy as a whole and, in particular, I would like to ask specifically about relations with the states of Eastern Europe and the states of the former USSR.

[Kostikov] Boris Nikolayevich, excuse me for a moment. I would simply like to point out that a very similar question has been submitted by a correspondent of the U.S. newspaper CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR. So, you could reply to several such questions in one go here.

[Yeltsin] In a state the issue of foreign policy is determined by the head of state, the president. He will remain at least till June 1996. This means that in principle the foreign policy remains.

[Kostikov] The Japanese television company TBS [Tokyo Broadcasting System] has a question. Go ahead, please, colleague, take the microphone.

[TBS Correspondent] Boris Nikolayevich...

[Kostikov, interrupting] Speak up, please.

[TBS Correspondent] Boris Nikolayevich, how can you explain the nomination for the post of chairman of the Ostankino Radio and Television Company?.

[Kostikov] What you mean is Aleksandr Nikolayevich Yakovlev?

[Yeltsin] This is a person who has a great deal of experience. He is a person who has spent most of his adult life working in the mass media. He has an excellent knowledge of the cadres. They have quite a good attitude toward him. He is confident in politics, and we are confident in him.

[Kostikov] KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA please.

[Zarypov] Thank you. Zarypov, KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA. Boris Nikolayevich, now you said right at the beginning that the people had, as it were, rebuked the government, that you were not getting things to work in the present situation, and that in general the voting was a vote of criticism. What do you think, in the present situation: Is it possible that there will be a departure from a rigid monetarist policy and a greater reliance by the government on some kind of social programs, or will your work develop in another way, so to speak? What is your opinion?

[Yeltsin] You see, here there are two positions which clash with one another. First of all, one would like, in the social field, to give very considerable help especially to those who are suffering. On the other hand, there is the level of inflation. And so we need to balance these two components. Our level of inflation now, since November, has begun to fall. If the level of inflation continues, as it did in November, to fall in December, in January and so on, we will of course make a serious change in our social policy from the point of view both of its direction and of a greater volume of social benefits, directed through the budget, for those of our people who are suffering.

[Zarypov] Boris Nikolayevich, we are nonetheless very worried that neo-fascist forces are gaining ground in Russia. One set of questions has already been asked about this, but still: Should these forces be combatted, or will you only be holding a dialogue and nothing else?

[Yeltsin] I did not use the word dialogue. I used the word cooperation [vzaimodeystviye] with factions in parliament. That means not only with the neo-fascists, to use your word. It means members of parliament. And I am obliged to cooperate with them because they were elected by the people.

I do not consider the threat as great as it is being blown up to be by certain mass media, as dangerous as that, because the people of Russia lived through so much ... [pauses] millions of lives, millions, were lost, tens of millions in Russia alone. So such a people and such a country, even more so with such a constitution, will not permit these forces to be unleashed.

[Kostikov] The newspaper IZVESTIYA please.

[Yeltsin, continuing] I think that if we want a competition in this, you have more of their kind in Japan.

[Kostikov] Kovalenko, IZVESTIYA.

[Kovalenko] I do beg your pardon, Mr. President, but it seems that you have skirted around the most important issue, concerning the future shape of our new government. I would like to ask about the principle that will form the basis of the process whereby the government is formed—will it be the team principle, the reform-minded team, or will it be the coalition principle? These are two different things. Naturally we are keen to know and perhaps you will elucidate. How substantial can the personnel reshuffle be in the new cabinet? Thank you.

[Yeltsin] No, there will not be a coalition government, because—well, not a coalition in its pure form as it is supposed to be—because the constitution, again, if you read it, says that during the transitional period, for a period of two years, the government now remains in

office—that government which is currently working remains in office. It is another matter that as a result of the new constitution, the new tasks, the new political conditions, of course the government will be seriously reformed. What does this reform consist of? First, the structure will change, and second, there will be a very serious reduction in the number of personnel within the government—all of it from the deputy chairmen to the ministers, and the apparatus, everyone.

I have already had the first such meeting with [Prime Minister Viktor] Chernomyrdin. We have drawn up the basic landmarks here, things are now being elaborated, and I think that approximately in a week or 10 days these proposals will be prepared and that these proposals concerning the reorganization of the government will be signed before the first parliamentary sitting.

[Kostikov] There is a question from the Australian newspaper MELBOURNE AGE; Robin Dixon, go ahead. Give our colleague the microphone.

[Dixon] There is a view that most of the Army voted for the Liberal Democratic Party. If this is true, does the president intend to take any measures in order not to lose control over the Armed Forces? Thank you.

[Yeltsin] Well, it was not most of the Army that voted for the Liberal Democratic Party, but a third. Nonetheless, it is a lot and it worries us. Relevant measures are already being taken now.

[Kostikov] A question from the newspaper REPUBBLICA of Italy, go ahead.

[Unidentified correspondent] Will there be any coalition or any relations between your government and the centrist parties, like the Democratic Party, or the Communist Party?

[Yeltsin] Between the government and the parties? What kind of coalition is that?

[Kostikov] No, will you cooperate with the Communists, Boris Nikolayevich, to put the question simply. [laughter]

[Yeltsin] He did not want to say that, but you said it! [laughter] It is called helping!

[Kostikov] Boris Nikolayevich, I was just translating from the Italian into Russian! [laughter]

[Yeltsin] I said that I will cooperate with all factions in parliament, if they act within the constitution.

[Kostikov] We do not have a presidential newspaper, but there is THE PREZIDENT newspaper, though. Dolganov would like to ask a question.

[Dolganov] Boris Nikolayevich, you expressed concern over the fragmentation of the democratic movement. In this connection, do you not intend to follow Western examples and set up a ruling presidential party?

[Yeltsin] I have been moving toward this for a long time, for several years, and finally, the election results have pushed me into deciding that such a party should be set up.

[Kostikov] Please the lady in the third row.

[Unidentified correspondent] I am from the CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR, U.S. newspaper. Boris Nikolayevich, you have said that you see the adoption of the constitution as a victory for democratic forces. But many people are saying that the constitution was adopted only because Zhirinvoskiy supported it. What is your view of this idea?

[Yeltsin] Well, I seem to have already answered a similar question.

[Kostikov] The question seems to be a repeat. Boris Nikolayevich has already answered it saying that the majority of Russians voted for the constitution.

[Indistinct comments by unidentified correspondent]

[Yeltsin] The thing is that there is yet another paradox there. The Liberal Democratic Party is in the lead in terms of the parties, among the party lists. But if we take territories—and we have a system whereby 225 people are elected on party lists and 225 on a first-past-the-posts basis, that is, from territories—so if we take territories, they preferred Russia's Choice. So, on the whole the Russia's Choice will have more seats in the parliament than the Liberal Democratic Party.

[Kostikov] Over to Mr. Beglov, RTA.

[Beglov] Boris Nikolayevich, going back to relations with parliament: Just as you said, it is obvious that the major result of the voting which took place on 12 December is the adoption of the constitution. It is also obvious that some forces in the new parliament will attempt to revise the new constitution. Do you intend to leave it as it is? And if so, how are you going to do it?

[Yeltsin] I think that in the initial stage no one will dare tamper with the constitution which has been accepted by the people. It would show a lack of respect for our own people. Time will go by, I do not know how long, maybe a year or 18 months, and life itself will highlight the amendments which will have to be made to the constitution. This is a possibility. The constitution already has provisions for a mechanism which will be activated in this case and for a way of introducing these amendments to the constitution. Read the constitution, there is a special section at the end of the constitution.

[Kostikov] Over to you colleague.

[Kroshin] Grigoriy Kroshin, STOLITSA magazine. Boris Nikolayevich, it is true that the majority of the population voted the constitution in. It is known, however, that if one is to look at the regions one can see that a number of republics, a number of oblasts, constituent parts of the Federation, have not carried a majority vote for the constitution. It looks as if you are going to have

certain difficulties and problems in this respect with these constituent parts of the Federation. What are your plans for overcoming these difficulties in the future? Thank you.

[Yeltsin] Yes, it is true that the electors' turnout did not reach the required threshold in some republics. That is why they did not vote the constitution in. But how can one reproach Ingushetia, which simply ignored the previous elections and just did not vote. This time it was 2 percent short of a 50-percent turnout. But out of those 48 percent who came to the polling stations the majority voted for the constitution. So, should we assume that it voted the constitution in or should we not? In other words, one cannot be so pedantic. After all, Russia's citizens as a whole voted for Russia's constitution, not individual regions, republics, krays, and oblasts.

[Kostikov] Please, the lady in the center of the second row. Yes, you please.

[Kuptsova] Veronika Kuptsova, KOMMERSANT-DAILY. Speaking of revising, Boris Nikolayevich...

[Kostikov, interrupting] On...

[Kuptsova] On revising, if I may. You said that the main objective of the new parliament is to publish acts developing the constitution. It is known already that Yavlinskiy and Lukin have suggested that a commission should be set up to investigate the events of 3 and 4 October. Some other blocs and factions may join them, I believe. What do you think of this?

[Kostikov] This issue of revising is not clear enough. Do you mean the revision of the constitution?

[Kuptsova] No, everything is clear as far as revision of the constitution goes. More than likely, nobody is going to revise it in the beginning. What about revising the recent events of the last few months?

[Yeltsin] You see, there is division of powers. Now the constitution has defined it very clearly. The prosecutor's office and the courts are doing their job. They should finish their job and report to the parliament.

[Kostikov] Question from HA'ARETZ, an Israeli newspaper. Aleksandr Lesser, please. Speak to the mike, please.

[Lesser] Dear Mr. President, the results of the elections may be interpreted as a protest; they may also be interpreted as a menace of national-chauvinism. The Jewish population of Russia is worried, when the LDP leader says he is against Zionism—he may mean other things. There are people who believe that you could speak out more strongly against anti-Semitism. The question is: Can you assure us that in the future you will speak out regularly against anti-semitism and other forms of jingoism? Thank you.

[Yeltsin] I can guarantee you this.

[DIE ZEIT correspondent] Thank you, DIE ZEIT, Hamburg. Mr President, you have placed a big task before parliament: to create a law-based state. But taking into account the composition of forces in the new State Duma, could it be that draft legislation will be blocked?

[Yeltsin] What's that about forces?

[Kostikov] Are there concerns that draft legislation will be blocked in the Duma, and what will you do then?

[Yeltsin] Well, let's not take such a pessimistic view before the Duma starts work. I think that the deputies will have enough common sense to adopt laws that are needed by the people.

[Kostikov] Our colleague in the denim jacket, please.

[Sokolov] Radio Liberty, Mikhail Sokolov. Boris Nikolayevich, can you tell us how the security bodies are going to be reformed under your decree, if we take into account that they will be reformed by the same people who headed them in the recent past, and can you tell us why the presidential security service is taken from the bodyguards department? Thank you.

[Yeltsin] The KGB, or the MB [Security Ministry], is the last bulwark of the former Soviet totalitarian system. The bodies of police supervision of the people had to be disbanded. That has been done. The Security Ministry is disbanded, not reorganized. The ministry as a whole has been disbanded. The body that for nearly 75 years carried out surveillance of the people has been disbanded. There will no more such surveillance. The people and the organizations that used to do this are no longer there. But counterintelligence remains, in defense of Russia's national interests.

Counterintelligence remains. It is the only one left of the numerous main directorates of the Security Ministry. And the reorganization will be carried out not by people who, as you say, used to be in charge and will now be in charge of counterintelligence, but by the leadership of the country, including the president at whose initiative this is being done.

[Kostikov] Please, give the microphone to our colleague in the aisle.

[Revenko] Mr. President, I am Yevgeniy Revenko from the youth channel [Radio Yunost]. You have been given six documents to sign on reform of the Russian media. In what way will the media be reformed?

[Yeltsin] I think [acting Press and Information Minister Vladimir] Shumeyko is giving a news conference on this subject at almost the same time as this one. Or has it already been held?

[Kostikov] Yes, it was held this morning.

[Yeltsin] In that case, you know more about it than I do. [laughter] The mass media will have a more precisely defined structure, its individual component parts will

have more independence, and the media are being taken out of the government's remit and are being subordinated to the president.

[Kostikov] Go ahead, Vera Kuznetsova, but could you just clarify for which newspaper you are working now?

[Kuznetsova] It is NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA.

[Kostikov] The NEZAVISIMAYA, is it? I asked because there were rumors that you had moved.

[Kuznetsova] Mr. President, you have declared now that you are ready to set up a ruling party. Whom do you see as your comrades-in-arms, and on which pre-election parliamentary groups do you intend to rely in establishing that party? Thank you.

[Yeltsin] Some people have blamed me for not adopting or helping a particular bloc or party in the election campaign. I do not consider such a one-sided attitude appropriate for the president. All participants in the election campaign must be equal in the president's eyes. Whatever the results of the election were—and some of them were sad—they were at least objective results, and not influenced by the president of this country. Naturally, if I had inclined toward a party or a bloc, perhaps its results would have been better, it is possible. However, I did not do that and I do not think that this is permissible. And so it is now: I will not have any preferences for some bloc or other, or a party, although, of course, my sympathies remain with the more democratically minded ones.

[Kostikov] The colleague on my right, please go ahead, yes, yes, yes yes.

[Pyatkovskiy] LITERATURNYYE NOVOSTI, Edmund Pyatkovskiy: Boris Nikolayevich, your decree abolishes the House of the Russian Press and nothing is said about the fate of the editorial boards housed therein. Please elucidate for us: Will the House of the Russian Press, which is already a part of our democratic history—for, after all, the rebels intended to take it by assault, following the taking of the mayor's office and the Ostankino—will it be preserved?

[Yeltsin] I think we will avoid assaults here through talks and discussions, in a peaceful way. The Federation Council must be housed somewhere. It is the upper chamber of parliament. The final decision will be up to it and it will have the final say on the adoption of laws, once they have been through the State Duma. That is why proper conditions must be created for it. Journalists, the House of the Press, those whose premises are housed there, will be given other premises of equal size, moreover in the city center.

[Kostikov] We had a question from the "Vesti" television program. Its contents have already been addressed, but out of respect for our television I can offer "Vesti" the chance to ask a question if they can formulate a new one. Do you wish to do this?

[Unidentified correspondent] Boris Nikolayevich, the losses that the Russia's Choice bloc suffered under the party lists were caused, to a large extent, by the policy that the government is conducting. Could you say more specifically what social guarantees and social benefits will be received by the citizens of Russia in the near future? The citizens of Russia are precisely expecting precisely some social benefits.

[Kostikov] The lack of success in the elections is connected with the bad social policy of the government. Will there be any changes in the social policy...

[Yeltsin, interrupting] At present the government—I understood the question—the government is now drawing up such proposals but they cannot be decided at a stroke, in one or two days. This is an important and major task. Everything must be weighed. One must now look at the 1994 budget and make calculations on that basis. Therefore, the final decisions on the direction of these social benefits and guarantees will be made somewhat later.

[Kostikov] Yes, you, please.

[Yanchenkov] ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA, Vladimir Yanchenkov.

[Kostikov] Louder, please.

[Yanchenkov] ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA, Vladimir Yanchenkov. Boris Nikolayevich, you said that during the election campaign the democrats were in disarray. What is your opinion today, is it possible to consolidate all the democratic forces of Russia? How do you personally regard Shakhray, Yavlinskiy, and the leaders of other blocs? My second small question...

[Kostikov] Just one question.

[Yanchenkov] Thank you.

[Yeltsin] Is it possible for what?

[Kostikov] Is it possible that the democratic forces will become consolidated?

[Yeltsin] Of course, the leaders have great ambitions, each of them. Undoubtedly, there are good reasons for these and I do not dispute this. But, all the same, I consider that life itself, and the conditions of work in parliament, in the State Duma, will force them to consolidate.

[Kostikov] Yes, in the third row, yes.

[Unidentified correspondent] Thank you. Radio Canada. What is the explanation for the personnel reshuffles and resignations in your close entourage? In how many ways can these be explained?

[Yeltsin] There will be more personnel reshuffles and resignations in the future. This is because a new policy has come in, as well as a new constitution, and it is necessary to adopt a new approach to the new tasks.

[Kostikov] I did not quite understand, someone got in front of you? Please put your question.

[Unidentified correspondent] If I may, I will translate. Italian newspaper CORRIERE DELLA SERA. Boris Nikolayevich, during the news conference you said that, at a minimum, you will remain in the post of president until 1996. Does this mean...

[Yeltsin, interrupting] I did not say at a minimum, excuse me; I said until June 1996. The constitution now determines for me the term for which I was elected.

[Correspondent] Does that mean that the newly elected Federal Assembly will not be able to express a view on early presidential elections?

[Yeltsin] It can express a view as much as it likes, but it has to respect the constitution. [laughter] It has to respect the constitution, which says clearly that the president carries out his duties for the term for which he was elected—until June 1996—if, of course, he does not commit any acts that fall under impeachment.

[Kostikov] You wanted to speak, please go ahead.

[Unidentified correspondent] Austrian Television. Boris Nikolayevich, does the prospect of a President Zhirinovskiy frighten you? Have you not made too good a gift to him in this constitution if he gets hold of the powers stipulated in it?

[Yeltsin] We are looking too far away, beyond 1996. But before 1996 nobody can step over me.

[Kostikov] Ladies and gentlemen, the time for this news conference is running out. By microphone five, go ahead please.

[Rosika] Thank you. Rosika, RUSSIAN INFORMATION AGENCY. Boris Nikolayevich, during recent times and the past year we have seen a sharp drop in industrial output. This is giving many the pretext to call for a revival of certain kinds of industry, including the military-industrial complex. In these new conditions, what is your attitude toward the MIC? Thank you.

[Yeltsin] I was in Tula at an exhibition, where heads of all the kray and oblast administrations were taking part, and where the military factories of Tula showed how they are carrying out their conversion. That is the way to proceed, and I think that there is no other way.

[Unidentified correspondent] I am from German Television. Boris Nikolayevich, it is 22 December today, and all Europe is already in a festive mood. Christmas and New Year are near. Leaving aside the political issues that you have just spoken about, what could you wish or advise us, or perhaps warn us of in connection with the coming year?

[Kostikov] A new year is coming and leaving politics aside, what could you wish?

[Yeltsin] Both for New Year and Christmas?

[Kostikov] Yes.

[Yeltsin] Well, some people will celebrate Christmas soon, in a few days, and others a little later, in the first 10 days of January. Nevertheless, we all celebrate these two holidays. I would wish you, journalists and all the mass information media, first of all, to work as bravely as you do now, regardless of certain attempts to put pressure on you, and not to be afraid of this.

Second, I would wish you to have a sharp pen and a sharp style. I would wish all the best to you and your families in the new year of 1994. Thank you. [Applause]

[Kostikov] Dear friends, the last question makes it impossible for us to continue the political discussion, therefore we are ending the news conference. Thank you very much.

[Yeltsin] Thank you.

TV Interviews Officials on Elections

LD2212003093

[Editorial Report] Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian at 1900 GMT on 21 December carries a 55-minute program entitled "Political Olympus" in which the commentator, Bella Kurkova, looks back on Liberal Democratic Party leader Vladimir Zhirinovskiy's success in Russia's election campaign. Most interviews take place late in the evening on election day, 12 December.

The program opens with the title "Shock, or Russians in the Dark" and shows the celebratory dinner held at the Kremlin Palace on 12 December attended by everyone from the political arena, plus actors and other public figures. Vladimir Zhirinovskiy walks around with his retinue and stops to launch a verbal attack on a group of film celebrities as they sit at the dinner table. The commentator repeats Zhirinovskiy's inaudible words: "You are on the third list for elimination."

The commentator then asks what happened to us during the elections of 12 December? Presidential press secretary, Vyacheslav Kostikov, says "the election results are in principle positive, first and foremost because the elections took place in a calm, normal atmosphere, without incident." Kostikov continues, saying: "I believe Yeltsin did a great service in putting Russia on firm ground within two months of the bloody putsch, within only two months, giving Russian citizens the chance to express their wishes calmly and with dignity." The interview with Kostikov takes place on the stairway with government press spokesman Valentin Sergeyev standing next to Kostikov. Sergeyev talks about the good working relations between Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin and Yeltsin.

On the subject of the stand Yeltsin took during the election campaign, Kostikov says: "Yeltsin understood that if he were to adopt a concrete stand in favor of one party or another, this would only make the situation

worse. It's quite clear that he has a stand, he has preferences, which are obvious to everyone, but as president of Russia, he simply did not want to announce them publicly."

The commentator criticizes the restrictions imposed on the media on election day. The militia at the Central Electoral Commission in Moscow, she says, were told not to let in journalists until 2100 hours [1800 GMT]. She says: "All Russia's information on the elections was blocked by an instruction by the chairman of the Central Electoral Commission. Chukotka and Kamchatka, Sakhalin and the Far East had already voted, but journalists had only rumors from unverified sources to go by." The commentator continues: "These are times when the elected have to pay in money; only the rich can pay." The independent candidate has to manage the best he can, she says. "So why are we surprised at the results of the elections? Thank you, Nikolay Timofeyevich Ryabov, for your ultra-democracy."

The next interview is in the office of Mikhail Poltoranin, ex-Federal Information Center chief. He laments the split among the democratic parties who pursued their own ambitions during the election campaign. "The authorities spent all their energy on self- destruction," he says, adding "I must reproach all of our democrats who trod on the Russia's Choice bloc during the election campaign, thus opening the way to Zhirinovskiy." He says a demoralized electorate, tired of political squabbling, voted for the man who made promises. He goes on: "Much of our media is also guilty for just playing, playing in this brawl, playing at taking democracy to its extremes. They did not realize how serious the threat was, how fascism was starting to loom just over their shoulders, as they say."

Footage captioned as archive material shows Zhirinovskiy promising he will make sure every family has champagne and pineapple at New Year. This is followed by separate interviews with people now very worried about the political situation.

Head of the president's administration Sergey Filatov is joyful that the constitution appears to have been accepted. Asked about the composition of the incoming parliament given Zhirinovskiy's success, he says: "I envisage two opposing groups—the democrats and the communists in this parliament—and I do not see Zhirinovskiy's party joining either. This party will of course present certain difficulties during work, this is quite clear. I spoke with him [Zhirinovskiy] today, and he said 'I will do everything to make sure work is constructive.' I replied jokingly that I would take him at his word. When Zhirinovskiy started out his campaign by supporting the president and giving all out support for the constitution, he ended by virtually insulting the president and rejecting the constitution. I think this lack of consistency may cause some problems in parliament."

Nikolay Medvedev, head of the directorate of the president's administration, fears parliamentary sittings "will turn into political meetings."

First Deputy Prime Minister Vladimir Shumeyko is pleased about the constitution, upset that the right parties did not get into the State Duma but cheered by the fact that opponents in the elections promised change for the better the very next day after the elections. We are already 15 minutes into 13 December, he points out. He says Russia's Choice did not make promises and has two years of work in the State Duma in which to prove itself. However, he says, "there is one thing I would definitely like to say, and it's good that Mikhail Nikiforovich Poltoranin is here with me. We all talk about reorganizing television, the mass media, our fourth power and so on. What do I think should be done? I think the Duma should be allowed to get on with work on legislation, that television should be removed from the hall." He implores journalists to communicate what has been done in parliament at the end of each week. Poltoranin agrees wholeheartedly about removing television. This would prevent parliament from becoming "a political structure," he says.

Poltoranin looks at his watch, realizes it's already one o'clock, and says he will be avoiding interviews as he is keen to see if the opposition's promises of cheap goods and [illegible]er wages following elections have been fulfilled. Shu[illegible] relates a conversation with an apologist voter wh[illegible]itted she knew Zhirinovskiy was "not quite norma[illegible]" but explained, "he promises you something". Shumeyko ends the interview on a very confident note, saying, "today the constitution is in place, the president is in place, there is authority in the country, everything will be all right from now on."

Tatar Speaker Seen Ignoring Zhirinovskiy Threat

PM2112142193 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 21 Dec 93 First Edition p 4

[Boris Bronshteyn report: "Tatarstan Supreme Soviet Speaker Draws Eight Conclusions, But a Ninth Comes to Mind"]

[Text] Kazan—The Republic of Tatarstan Supreme Soviet press center has published in the local press a report on a meeting with journalists by parliament speaker Farid Mukhametshin at which he drew eight conclusions on the basis of the Russian election results.

These conclusions, numbered from one to eight, contain thoughts that Tatarstan's people made a conscious choice in favor of the republic's sovereignty and did not support the Russian Constitution, which enshrines the principles of authoritarianism and diktat by the center. The growing confidence of Tatarstan's people in their president, parliament, and government is also noted. And, by contrast, the confident assumption that public sympathy is recoiling from the Russian leaders' present policy is expressed. Farid Mukhametshin believes that

the Russian democrats (he sometimes calls them quasi-democrats) are winding up their political career by creating a firm foundation for a real political new year—the year of a neoconservative wave.

The results of the voting in the referendum, Farid Mukhametshin said, require thoughtful analysis.

This is clearly indeed the case, for after thoughtful analysis it can be noted that his conclusions do not even mention one of the most important results of the elections—the sharp strengthening in the positions of Russian national extremism. And this fact, which perturbed many foreign states, for some reason did not cause the slightest concern among the leaders of a republic in the middle of Russia.

Clearly, a wave of neoconservatism, if one does indeed sweep in from Moscow, bodes ill for the sovereignty of Tatarstan. But how does this possible annoyance look against the backdrop of Vladimir Zhirinovskiy's promise to turn the national republics into guberniyas?

Hence a ninth conclusion comes to mind which, once again after due analysis, may turn out to be one of the first conclusions: Although Tatarstan has not supported the Russian Constitution and the Russian democrats, in the new political conditions, like it or not, they give the republic insurance against being crudely turned into Kazan Guberniya.

Party, Other Reaction

Zhirinovsky Pledges Support for Former Military

WS2112125493 Tallinn BNS in English 1750 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] Tallinn, Dec 20, BNS—Vladimir Zhirinovsky gave his backing to the Russian Community of Estonia's protest against the Estonian Government's decree on granting residence permits to foreign retired officers. He affirmed his support in a telephone conversation with Pyotr Rozhok, a member of the Russian Community of Estonia's executive committee and of the executive committee of the Russian Liberal Democratic Party.

Zhirinovsky also voiced support for the community's protest against the Estonian Government's intention to resettle the families of 30 officers from the town of Viljandi, Rozhok told BNS.

The executive committee of the Russian Community of Estonia approved the draft for the protest statement at a meeting Saturday [18 December] and the community's council is expected to pass the document today.

Under the decree the Estonian Government adopted Nov. 23 only part of the estimated 11,000 officers retired from the former Soviet Army resident in Estonia may apply for a residence permit.

Rozhok said Zhirinovsky "threatened the Estonian Government with dire consequences if it takes whatever step in this direction."

"The Liberal Democratic faction in the Russian State Duma and the Federal Council will take all possible measures to protect both the military and all Russians in the Baltic states, including Estonia," Rozhok quoted Zhirinovsky as saying.

Views Japan, Germany, 'Outlying Districts'

LD2112195193 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1745 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] The leader of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, said in an interview with INTERFAX on Tuesday that he was ready to hold negotiations on the Kuril Islands with Japan.

"The Communists dillydallied over the transfer of the islands and so did members of the Democratic Russian Movement. However, it is possible to reach an agreement with us if Japan helps us in our foreign policy in the South," the LDP leader promised.

Zhirinovskiy supports the necessity for the "last division of the spheres of influence" and for establishment of the "new Russian frontiers in the South" in his new book "The Last Breakthrough to the South."

However, Zhirinovskiy completely excluded the possibility of a "new war between Russia and Germany in the Balkans for Serbia or Croatia" or "between Russia and Japan for the Kuril Islands."

Zhirinovskiy reminded that the war with fascism had effected every Russian family including his which "had also eaten the nettle soup for four years." In his opinion, this excludes the possibility of emergence of fascism in Russia.

According to Zhirinovskiy, the accusations of nationalism and fascism put forward against the LDP were based only on their position concerning "defense of the rights of Russians."

In his opinion, there was "anti-Russian sentiment" reigning in the Russian outlying districts (according to Zhirinovskiy, these are the states situated on the territory of the former Russia Empire). "There nationalism is used as a political weapon," Zhirinovskiy pointed out.

The leader of the Liberal Democratic Party (the federal tickets of which received most of votes during the elections on December 12) intends to admit no "violation of the rights of Russians" or any "division of the country" in the future. However, he is against any new struggle between peoples.

Calls For 'Union With Germany'

LD2112192393 Berlin DDP in German 1840 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Munich (DDP)—The leader of the right-wing extremist Liberal Democratic Party of Russia, Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, called for a "union with Germany" in Munich on Tuesday evening. The victor in the Russian elections had a meeting with Gerhard Frey, chairman of the right-wing German People's Union [Deutsche Volksunion], during a stopover at Munich airport.

Whenever friendship had prevailed between Russia and Germany there had been no war, said Zhirinovskiy. The Russian politician gave an assurance that he did not want to change any borders by force. The "strategic point" for Russian foreign policy was a "union with Germany." Zhirinovskiy spoke in favor of more youth exchanges and economic cooperation between the two peoples. A union between the Germans and the Russians would "benefit the whole world," Zhirinovskiy added. He hoped that "no more mistakes" would be made in relations between the two countries.

Frey described Zhirinovskiy's party's performance in the elections in Russia as a "victory for peace." Now the "old tradition of everlasting friendship" between Germans and Russians would be restored.

Notes Readiness To Meet Clinton

LD2212133193 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1218 GMT 22 Dec 93

[Text] Bonn/Vienna December 22 TASS—Russian Liberal Democratic Party (LDPR) leader Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, who is touring a number of West European countries, met with Gerhard Frey, chairman of the German People's Union, a right-wing radical party, at Munich Airport on Tuesday when the LDPR leader made a brief stopover on his way to Vienna. Zhirinovskiy referred to Frey as his "friend".

The government circles in Bonn confirmed that Zhirinovskiy had been given a visa to enter Germany, "for there is no legislative ground to deny an entry visa to the LDPR leader", the DPA news agency points out.

LDPR leader Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, who arrived in Austria for a brief private visit, gave a press conference at the Schwechat Airport late on Tuesday night. He said that from Vienna he would proceed to the Austrian city of Klagenfurt, where he would stay at the invitation of Russian and Austrian entrepreneurs, and would then leave by air for Cologne where he would appear on television.

Former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, whose recorded interview will also be broadcast in the same programme, cautioned against underestimating Zhirinovskiy: "At first Hitler was also treated with irony. However, an enormous price for that had to be paid a couple of years later".

Asked by journalists whether the LDPR had any contacts with the right-wing forces of Western Europe, Zhirinovskiy said his party did not seek contacts with the rightists. He said "the LDPR comes out in favour of a calm atmosphere in Europe, not for an alliance of left-wing or right-wing parties. Our party is of centrist, moderate conservative trend—neither communism nor fascism".

Touching upon the internal political situation in Russia following the recent parliamentary elections, the LDPR leader pointed out that "the communists and democrats made a lot of errors" over the past period. The election results indicate, he maintained, that the LDPR has found a broad following.

About relationship with the west, Zhirinovskiy said any western country may help Russia but Russia does not need that. "Russia is a country with abundant resources, and it is prepared to develop equitable economic relations with all states. I understand western businessmen who have misgivings in view of the economic situation in Russia," the LDPR leader added.

Zhirinovskiy said he was prepared to meet with U.S. President Bill Clinton during the latter's forthcoming visit to Russia if the U.S. President would so wish.

Hails Saddam Husayn's Leadership

JN2112195093 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Excerpt] Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, leader of the Russian Liberal Democratic Party, has hailed the unique, historic leadership of struggler President Saddam Husayn.

During his meeting today in Moscow with the Iraqi ambassador to Russia, Zhirinovskiy asked the ambassador to convey his greetings to leader President Saddam Husayn, as well as his wishes for his excellency's continued good health and success in achieving all goals for which the Iraqi people are struggling under his wise leadership.

Zhirinovskiy, whose party has had a good showing in the recent parliamentary elections in Russia, told INA's correspondent in Moscow that his party supports Arab causes which Iraq is upholding. He added that one of his party's priorities, in the near stage, is to work actively to enhance Russian relations with Iraq and contribute toward lifting the unjust embargo imposed on its people. [passage omitted]

Background, Statements Viewed

AU2112191893 Zagreb GLOBUS in Serbo-Croatian 17 Dec 93 pp 2,4

[Report on "exclusive interview" with Vladimir Volfovich Zhirinovskiy, president of the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia, by GLOBUS Moscow correspondent

Vlado Vurusic in the Slavskaya Hotel in Moscow; date not given: "We Want Restoration of Yugoslavia, But We Will Not Insist on It"]

[Text] A day after dramatic parliamentary elections, the Russian megalopolis is still in a state of mild shock and skepticism, but one can also sense a certain degree of indifference. There are no open outbursts of emotion on any side of party barricades in Moscow. Sensational election results were the greatest surprise for intellectuals and entrepreneurs: Those very circles had mostly given up on the elections, thinking that the defeat of Khasbulatov and Rutskoy in the recent bloodshed around the parliament building had turned everything into a positive advantage for Yeltsin. However, the elections held on Sunday [12 December] quite unexpectedly gave the majority vote (approximately 25 percent) to former political outsider and political clown, former unsuccessful KGB intelligence officer in Turkey, Vladimir Volfovich Zhirinovskiy and his Liberal Democratic Party of Russia.

The Moscow media are more openly referring to Zhirinovskiy as Fuehrer, neo-Nazi, and ultra-nationalist, which, immediately after the unofficial election results became public, he started to deny, giving compliments, sometimes utterly obsequious ones, even to the Jews, although his election campaign appearances were marked by anti-Semitism.

Pro-Yeltsin and other democratic and reform parties, of which Deputy Prime Minister Yegor Gaydar's "Russia's Choice" is the biggest, figured they would be successful in winning the elections, and they even organized a luxurious television party "for a new political year" in the Kremlin congress hall. All important Russian politicians were invited and they were entertained by the most famous Russian actors and singers. Even the leading Russian astrologist Globa made a prophecy and predicted absolute agony for Russia in the next two years, after which there will be a period of Sun. However, when election results started coming from the most distant parts of Russia, announcing the victory of Zhirinovskiy, and in some districts even of communists, the celebration was abruptly interrupted and program hosts and participants, among which was Zhirinovskiy himself, were baffled. Instead of performing, many singers and actors excitedly expressed, without any distance and manners, and even without decorum, their dissatisfaction and confusion with Zhirinovskiy's victory, saying that Russia had gone mad, and that the Russians were unfortunately, still behaving like sheep, blindly following the dumb ram.

At the same time, equally confused, Zhirinovskiy was theatrically strolling along the huge hall with his half-drunken companions. The entire clumsy new-political-year party, which was supposed to be the year of the triumph of Boris Yeltsin and Russian democratic forces, after elections results were made public, turned into their debacle and to victory of Russian neo-fascists. However, at the same time, the referendum ratified Russia's new constitution, which gave almost unlimited rights to President Yeltsin, who can veto any parliamentary decision and also has "exclusive right" to select the government. Thus Zhirinovskiy, in spite of his election victory and predominance in parliament—which is again called the Duma, as in Czarist times—will probably be left without any significant influence over major political decisions.

His Mother Is a Russian, His Father a Lawyer!

Before the elections, Vladimir Zhirinovskiy was noted by his unrestrained statements, like his demand that Russia must regain its borders of 1917, when, apart from countries of the former USSR, it also comprised Poland and Finland. Vladimir Volfovich Zhirinovskiy even dared to demand that the United States return Alaska! However, today, after the elections, Zhirinovskiy denies his territorial and imperial pretensions. He is of Jewish origin, which does not make him happy; when asked about his nationality, he gave a very original reply. He said that his mother is a Russian, and his father a lawyer! Russian pro-Yeltsin and democratic newspapers claim that Zhirinovskiy is actually a Jew, but a great anti-Semite as well, who, in one of his election campaign speeches, said that Russian Television hosts must be blond, blue-eyed Russians.

Forty-eight-year-old Zhirinovskiy is of Polish origin; he was born in the suburbs of Almaty, the capital of Kazakhstan. In Moscow, they say that he became a KGB associate already while he was studying Oriental Studies. He studied French and Turkish. When he finished his studies he went to Turkey, where he was arrested by members of Turkish security service while he was trying to sell communist leaflets and badges showing Marx's face to a Turkish intellectual. Questioned by the Turkish police, he justified his actions saying that the face on the badge was actually the great Russian writer Lev Tolstoy, wondering how come policemen did not recognize it. Still, he did not manage to convince the Turks that he was innocent, so he was banned from the country for life.

In addition to being banned from Turkey, Zhirinovskiy was involved in a scandal to send Russian volunteers to Saddam Husayn, in return for which Husayn promised (and Zhirinovskiy now denies this) to give him about $10 billion in case Zhirinovskiy would win the elections.

After that spy debacle in the early 70's, the KGB thanked him for his services. It is rather odd that Zhirinovskiy, although he worked for the KGB, was never a member of Soviet Communist Party. Today this presents one of his strongest arguments, especially with the young and in rural areas, in Siberia and in the Russian Far East, which is his main election base.

Ban the Sale of "Snickers" Bars

Apart from having advocated imperialist Russia, Zhirinovskiy is an avid fighter against U.S. economic pressure, which, as he says, is destroying Russia. In his election campaign, he gave an example of the "Snickers"

bar as a metaphor of Russian dependence on Western capital, and asked to ban their sale in Moscow, as that is the reflection of a capitalist decadent empire. However, at the first post-election news conference, which gathered all important foreign correspondents held in Moscow on Tuesday morning, he said he would advocate general pluralism and even moral pluralism.

Regarding domestic politics, Zhirinovskiy is trying to get on the good side of the army and the police, but also of people who are more and more dissatisfied with crime, which is on the increase. The Russian election victor accepted the proposal for the establishment of courts-martial and executing criminals on the spot. Indeed, accepting that proposal fits into his political philosophy. Zhirinovskiy wrote a book in which he systematized his political views. That book allegedly resembles "Mein Kampf" and Zhirinovskiy claims that Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin reads a page of his book every night before going to sleep and that helps him be a better president.

Vladimir Volfovich Zhirinovskiy, a politician with such a background, was favored by most Russian citizens in Croatia, including members of the UNPROFOR [United Nations Protection Forces]. Only 66 Russian citizens in Croatia voted for Yeltsin's and Gaidar's "Russia's Choice" *(Vybor Rossii)!* Asked to comment on those results, Zhirinovskiy's candidate for prime minister, Alexander Vengerovskiy, also of Jewish origin, just smiled and said that was normal and that everything would be more efficient and better now, and that we should not be concerned, for everything would be resolved "either in this or that way," but to our satisfaction. The only problem is that Mr. Vengerovskiy did not know which country of former Yugoslavia we came from.

At the crowded news conference I managed to ask a few questions of V.V. Zhirinovskiy who was in a good mood all the time, telling jokes but with a lot of demagogy, threatening the Estonians and the Poles. Asked to give his view on the problem of war in former Yugoslavia, he offered some "original" solutions.

A Beginning of a New Epoch

In a very compassionate manner Zhirinovskiy said: "We are very sad to see such bloodshed and terrible things, such a horrid war, happening in the Balkans which is very close to us. Our election victory will give a new shape to the Russian foreign policy. This is the beginning of a new epoch. Your problem must be solved by a general compromise; a formula for stopping inter-religious conflicts must be found. In view of all that, the new Russian government and its ministers will find the way for the Slovenes, Serbs, Croats, and Bosnians finally to start living normal lives. The problem can be solved. I would not go into details right now, for the Russian government has not yet agreed on everything. Our government will take necessary steps which will be to your satisfaction. I assure you. We are against war, we are against international intervention on anyone's side, for that can only complicate the problem. Our new foreign ministry will immediately start working on stopping the war and establishing good Croat-Serb relations. We will use all legal means to achieve that. I have already met and talked to representatives of similar Serbian parties and with representatives of Slovene liberals and I think we have a lot in common. I assure you that my party will pioneer the new foreign policy orientation of the Russian Federation. Generally speaking, we favor peace, and no Russian mother will ever again mourn her son killed in an offensive war. We do not want to fight for territory!

"I am sure that, in a year or two, a large number of former Soviet republics, or some parts of those republics, will beg to become members of the Russian Federation. Although, for example, we are not satisfied with the politics of Estonia toward the Russians living there, we will not make war with them, but we will not give them a single watt of electricity, not a single drop of oil or gas. Sweden can give it to them, if it wants."

Vladimir Volfovich added that, if necessary, he will personally go on a tour to contribute to a peaceful solution for ending this war in, as he says, Yugoslavia.

Guest of Seselj's Party

The spectacular news conference was organized by the Moscow Press Club, which is led by Americans who would not admit anyone without their credentials into the hall, which even caused a minor anti-U.S. feeling. French journalists were the most dissatisfied, but that restriction also hit Zhirinovskiy's foreign minister, so he almost got into a fight with the Americans at the entrance and swore a lot. It was exactly Aleksey Valentinovich Mitrofanov, former official of the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who stated in his exclusive interview for GLOBUS that their election victory finally marks the end of pro-Serbian Russian foreign politics, which does not mean that it will necessarily become pro-Croatian. Indeed, Aleksey Valentinovich said that after a peaceful solution which he knows will be achieved, all Yugoslav nations should consider forming a union, but he would have nothing against if that should not happen.

"We will act against those Western countries which advocate disintegration of that region. To make it more clear, we are also against sanctions imposed on Serbia, for they will not produce any results, and it is especially ridiculous to sanction medicine and food. That is wrong. In Bulgaria, we were told by representatives of similar Bulgarian parties that we should relinquish pro-Serbian politics and that we are absolutely wrong in our relations toward Croatia, which was not very nicely presented in Russia. We listened to our Bulgarian counterparts and we really think that the politics of Russia toward Serbia and Croatia must change."

Representatives of Zhirinovskiy's Liberal Democratic Party also met with representatives of several Serbian opposition parties in Bulgaria. Last year in Belgrade,

when Zhirinovskiy was an entirely marginal person on the Russian political scene, a member of his present government visited Milosevic. Mitrofanov said that the famous Russian dissident, Russian writer and homosexual Eduard Limonov, who talked to Seselj, is a completely marginal member of the party. Limonov was on the hills above Sarajevo, and he fired a few rounds on the city from a machine gun!

"We would like to establish contacts with representatives of Croatian parties as well, and we would like to hear from them, if they think that we, as a party which won the elections, can help them. And we can! We will exert more and more influence on foreign politics. Indeed, perhaps you were told here that we support the Serbs in your war, but now it will all change. We, as a party which won the elections, cannot only have party politics, but must also consider the reputation of Russia, for Russia comes first."

After the conference, Zhirinovskiy flamboyantly left the hall of the Slavskaya Hotel accompanied by his many bodyguards and members of the shadow cabinet, who were a bit confused giving their cards to journalists who gathered around them.

Leaving the hall with a radiant smile, Zhirinovskiy also announced that he would soon meet with Yeltsin.

Moscow is still living a normal life, snow is falling, beggars are lying in puddles of melted snow begging for a ruble, while young Russian entrepreneurs estimate the extent of possible damage from the elections. Many exchange offices recorded a slight increase of the dollar after the elections. Shops are still packed with imported goods, and most Russians who cannot afford many of those goods, apathetically and indifferently await further developments of the Russian election miracle.

Chubays, Gaydar, Others Discuss Election Results

LD2112152093

[Editorial Report] Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian at 1551 GMT on 20 December carries the 30-minute "Echo of the Week" discussion program on the national election results. An unidentified moderator introduces Deputy Prime Ministers and Russia's Choice leaders Anatoliy Chubays and Yegor Gaydar; Mark Urnov and Igor Bunin, members of the Political Technology Center Foundation; Konstantin Zatulin, leader of the Party of Russian Unity and Accord; and Aleksandr Bebz, vice president of the Russian Scientific Foundation.

Chubays begins by saying that the election result is not as simple as a victory for the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia, LPDR, and a defeat for the democrats. According to the party lists the Liberal Democrats got considerably more votes but Russia's Choice greatly outstripped the LPDR in constituencies with more than one candidate standing. Figures show that the Russia's Choice bloc got 103 seats in the State Duma while Zhirinovskiy's party got only 66 seats. So Chubays says he would be calmer about the idea of some kind of triumphal procession by Zhirinovskiy around the country. The real picture is not quite what it seemed in the first few days after the elections, Chubays says.

The moderator reminds Gaydar that for about five months on this program he had been repeating that there is a threat of fascism and asks if now after the elections, he could say what he had in mind then. Gaydar replies:

"Of course, if you remember in one of my first interviews after my resignation at the very beginning of 1993 I drew attention to the fact that the threat of radical nationalism was the main strategic threat to socialist democracy, for a whole set of reasons. A radical change in the socio-economic conditions brings society up against fresh problems, because a big part, at least a considerable part, of the population is finding it difficult or impossible to cope with these problems. Even if these reforms go successfully there are always big social groups which lose out. Reforms, at least at the initial stage, inevitably take place against the background of worsening social inequalities. All this creates very unpleasant long-term fodder for radical nationalist demagogy.

"The problem of fascism is that you somehow do not see it; the problem consists strategically in the fact that it always comes in a bit of a clownish garb. If you remember, the figure of Hitler in 1925 was seen as extremely comic by the greater part of German society. And for us, of course, despite the fact that we very clearly saw and understood the strategic nature of the threat, and to some extent everything we tried to do and are doing is designed precisely to prevent that threat, to creat prerequisites for the earliest possible stabilization of the situation in Russia, tactically we did not in fact quite correctly and accurately assess the form in which this threat would come into being today." Gaydar goes on: "At the same time I would agree with Anatoliy Chubays that there is here no reason for panic. Any panic is the worst way of waging a fight. So far I have not heard of a single battle being won by panic. After all, the overwhelming proportion of people today did not vote for fascism. The overwhelming proportion of people were simply expressing discontent, disillusionment, skepticism, readiness to believe any promises to quickly resolve the problems."

Urnov says that 12 December was a watershed marking the end of one stage of Russia's development and the beginning of a new era. On 12 December the rightist extremist sector of the population which before had been inchoate, crystallized and gained an effective structure and a charismatic and vigorous leader. Urnov says he would not describe it as an expression of public discontent. For a year now there has been a growth of nationalism, anti-intellectualism, of a desire for a strong hand.

Zatulin states that society wants an intelligent regime, one which is not insensitive to the problems of society.

Fascism was not brought to power in Germany by the Social Democrats' agreement with the Communists, as per Marxist historiography, but by the policy of Chancellor Bruening who pursued a policy of tough financial stabilization such as we have. It is impossible to explain to people that they must like a regime which a week or two before the elections through the mouth of its finance minister puts an extra tax on savings, Zatulin says.

Gaydar asks if society voted for Zhirinovskiy because it wanted an intelligent regime. Zatulin says society voted for Zhirinovskiy because people were so fed up with being given the choice of a dacha or having their heads kicked in that they were looking for someone who would not give them that choice.

Bunin, asked how society did vote, says that according to geographical research, in many constituences they voted for the constitution on the one hand and for the Zhirinovskiy list on the other, and thirdly for Russia's Choice. The voter was not putting all his eggs into one basket. He was voting simultaneously for law and order, for the constitution, and in protest against the existing regime.

Bebz adds that the elections were like a chemical reaction against the situation in society which had taken shape over the past two or three years. They felt let down. They did not vote so much for Zhirinovskiy as against their fate.

Chubays says: "There is a very important idea that has been expressed here, the idea that one can simply separate the attitude to Zhirinovskiy from the attitude to those who voted for Zhirinovskiy. In fact we have already seen in our brief conversation another attempt to pile the reasons on one another and make accusations while in actual fact the people voted for Zhirinovksiy and voted the splendid deceit which was so masterly, professionally, and brilliantly performed on the screen throughout the election campaign.

"In this context the most important and the simplest thing is that it is the duty of those in the democratic blocs to speak the truth and call a spade a spade. It is to say why what Zhirinovskiy said is deceit, why this deceit cannot be made to come true, why the attempt to make this deceit come true would mean starting a war.

"This is the dilemma in which we now find ourselves: Either the democratic forces will find in themselves some power to explain to people that they have been deceived, in what precisely they have been deceived, or the democratic forces will, as they so love to do, start accusing each other of all kinds of faults, pointing the finger and saying it's your fault, no it's your fault, and in the meantime the serious danger which has today arisen is really leding us to this very abyss which everyone has been talking about," Chubays says.

Urnov gives his opinion of Zhirinovskiy's prospects - he is a winner and people love a winner, there is a good chance that he may rise even further since he has two years to criticize and theorize without having to take on any responsibility for delivering what he promises.

The moderator asks them to speculate on the composition of the future parliament and the factions and blocs which might form.

Bebz gives his analysis which includes comments about the problems which the democrats are having in uniting. Gaydar follows with these comments:

"I would not like people to get the impression that Russia's Choice is against a widening of the governmental base or against a broad-based coalition. But such a coalition does not of course just presuppose a mobilization of forces against something, it presupposes a mobilization of forces in favor of something. The bloc which Yavlinskiy heads has its own positive points in its program, on which it intends to concentrate, antimonopoly policies for example. Well, we are extremely dissatisfied with our own antimonopoly policies ourselves. Here are specific proposals and people who are prepared to deal with it. This is splendid. It represents, without any doubt, a strengthening of the policy which we need to implement today. And of course we need to do a great deal to coordinate our own parliamentary tactics and our own parliamentary priorities so that we are not dispersed in all directions, so that we have a common opponent with whom we differ on the fundamentals rather than the specifics of economic strategy. It is not so much how fast we grow but where we go. The question of whether to move slightly slower or faster is not the subject of serious debate.

"Nevertheless, we should have a firm understanding of the fact that a stable Russian democracy means growing output. Growing output means investment in production and capital and voluntary saving by the population. Voluntary saving by the population and investment in production means moderate, controllable inflation. This is the harsh economic logic which cannot be got around."

Bunin expresses the opinion that it is the reformers' style rather than the substance of the reforms which is at fault—they are not specific enough about what they intend to do. Any new bloc or coalition needs to address this problem.

The moderator asks whether democracy has been defeated. Chubays says yes, but it is the battle rather than the war which has been lost. The main thing now is to learn from this. Zatulin says people were deceived, they must now be educated, things must be explained to them but they should not be written off as being against democracy.

The moderator then asks whether the new parliament is likely to survive for two years. A debate again ensues about the need for the reformers to unite, with Chubays saying that Russia's Choice will not enter into compromises or power-sharing agreements with the Liberal

Democrats. Bunin agrees that any attempt to give Zhirinovskiy respectability, be it through alliance with another party or meeting with Yeltsin, would be likely to have a negative effect.

Urnov says the old era of confrontation is over and that things will now go in favor of the new parties and against the ruling elite for as long as the bloc leaders remain distrustful of one another.

Gaydar says he agrees, the ultimatums, threats, and demands of the past must be left behind: "We are not issuing any ultimatums. We have made no demands as a precondition for intensive work. We are ready to do such work. More than that, we have made a start on it and I am absolutely convinced that we will succeed in finishing it."

The moderator asks: "All the same, with the outcome of the situation which has now developed and what is implicit in it, how might things develop over the next six months at least?"

Gaydar replies: "Well, first as far as the parliament is concerned, the parliament will be a difficult one whatever happens. It will be divided and difficult. It will be hard for it to make any decisions at all."

Bunin states that parliament will not have much scope. It might be paralyzed by the different blocs obstructing one another. Moreover, its upper chamber, the Federation Council, is conservative and traditionalist. The pace, nature, and type of reforms will depend on the president. He is the decisive figure despite the fact that he has suffered a political defeat.

Urnov says it is impossible to predict what the parliament will be like at the moment. However, the radical right and left will push the rest into the center and they will have to cooperate.

Russia's Choice Figure Views Democrats' Tasks

PM2112153993 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 18 Dec 93 p 1

[Vladislav Krukovskiy report: "Vasiliy Selyunin: 'The Key to the Democrats' Success Is To Waken Up Passive Citizens.' Famous Current Affairs Commentator, Political Scientist, and One of 'Russia's Choice' Leaders, Analyzes the Election Results in Conversation with Our Correspondent Vladislav Krukovskiy"]

[Text] There is no point in fooling ourselves. Russia has not chosen in favor of "Russia's Choice." This fact must be admitted. But a disaster has not taken place. As Pasternak said: "You do not have to separate defeat from victory." This is correct inasmuch as the reform policy should and will be continued. Only it is necessary to work many times more effectively.

Now that things have changed for the worse, we should first and foremost rid ourselves of our disgusting arrogance. This was characteristic of us in the days and weeks running up to the election.

What is special about the present situation is as follows. Here are two seemingly mutually exclusive theories. First, society has become polarized. Second, it has become weary. Under the pressure of everyday needs, it does not wish to participate in politics any more. What is paradoxical is that both these theories are correct.

A relative balance of the polarized forces has developed in the country. It has come to pass that, both in parliament and in active public life, we will have roughly the same power as the Liberal Democratic Party. On the other hand, there was a relatively low turnout—the lowest ever at 51-52 percent. This means that one-half of society did not at a critical moment participate in any way in determining Russia's future course. This means that if we wish to work in circumstances which have changed for the worse, we have to struggle to win over these passive, tired people, the silent half of society. We have definitely not lost these people. The aim of this struggle is to rally the forces opposed to fascism. It is possible and necessary to win over what is for the moment a passive force by pursuing this aim.

Fairly good conditions have arisen for this. Society has received a sort of inoculation against fascism. True, people will not now say: "They shall not pass." They have already passed. But society's silent half is potentially on our side. It was simply not prepared to pay the high price for Russia's reforms. But under the pressure of a real threat, the mood of this part of society will change, and it will change in favor of democracy. This implies the following conclusion: He who wins over the hearts and minds of the silent part of society will be victorious.

In my view the idea of a unified antifascist front in the country is in the air. It is now already impossible to move the reforms forward by simple legitimate means without offending anybody. It is therefore necessary to talk about the organizational consolidation of all people opposed to fascism. I have in mind first and foremost the democratic factions of the new parliament which will be a kind of headquarters for the progressive forces. I think that we will unite there. The prevailing circumstances are not giving us any other choice. The threat is too obvious and great for the various types of democrats to pursue their feuds which we saw before the elections.

The democratic forces should give themselves absolutely specific tasks in the changed circumstances. What the presidential election and the referendum, and even the recent elections show is that the democrats unite well particularly around specific tasks. But what in my view are these tasks at the moment? The first is to continue the economic and political reforms. The most important thing here is the ruble's stabilization. Without this no reforms will get under way. If it is not achieved, Ukrainianization of the economy is in store for us. Only the

ruble's stabilization will save each of us from the most demeaning of taxes—inflation. I recently read with alarm that 300 billion rubles are again being appropriated for agriculture in the form of free credits. We will not stabilize the ruble in this manner!

The second extremely important task is to strengthen the state. Unfortunately, the democrats did not include this task in their election slogans. Now the democrats should become the party of order and stability. But this initiative has been hijacked from them. While we were discussing the fight against crime, the liberal-democrats made this fight one of their main slogans and scored points. But this program is after all ours!

Finally, there is conversion. The Liberal Democratic Party has already stated that it will curtail the country's remilitarization [as published]. Here the democrats should demonstrate to the population that this will lead to war. After all, if one-third of GNP goes on defense (as was the case before), this is the level of a country at war. We will not build a new Russia on this basis.

It is by these routes that the democrats should regain what they lost in the elections. This is a completely realistic task which is within their power.

Burbulis Wants Constitution 'Intact,' Yeltsin Until '96

LD2112202293 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1745 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Gennadiy Burbulis, president of the humanitarian and political science center Strategy and a leader of the Russia's Choice bloc, told INTERFAX Tuesday that he wanted the new Constitution to be kept intact for two years and President Boris Yeltsin to serve his full term. He said that if the new parliament was persuaded into making such decisions, stability would be preserved in Russia.

Burbulis also believes it was essential to press ahead with economic reform, in particular privatization, financial stabilization, economy structuring, and true autonomy of the regions. In his view, democrats should join their efforts for "full-fledged structuring of a civil society in the form of parties." Burbulis made it clear that these views were shared by Russia's Choice.

Commenting on the statement made by Vice Premier and Finance Minister Boris Fedorov, in which he did not rule out the possibility that Russia's Choice would leave the government, Burbulis said that "if the government turns out to be a pseudo-coalition again which adopts contradictory decisions, we will not make such compromises."

Burbulis objected to replacing Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin. "The Yeltsin-Chernomyrdin team is one stabilizing element and the good work of Gaydar, Fedorov, and Chubays in the government is another," he believes.

Burbulis thinks that the election results should compel Russia's Choice to make a courageous decision about changing its political style. He explained that the democratic wing of parliament would have to learn "the ABC's of coalition activities."

PRUA Spokesman Views Possible Party Agreements

LD2112165493 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1515 GMT 21 Dec 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Tamara Zamyatina]

[Text] Moscow December 21 TASS—The Party of Russian Unity and Accord [PRUA] will not be seeking any union with the Russia's Choice bloc in the new Russian parliament, Konstantin Zatulin, one of the party leaders, told a news conference in Moscow on Tuesday [21 December].

Zatulin said that Russian vice-prime ministers Sergei Shakhray and Aleksandr Shokhin elected to the Federal Assembly as party candidates "are ready to resign from their posts so that (Prime Minister) Viktor Chernomyrdin [can] form a new government, placing responsibility for its work on the leading parliamentary factions, including the Agrarian Party and the Women of Russia Movement."

Zatulin believes that Shakhray's party will have about 28 to 29 seats in the State Duma, the lower house of Russia's new parliament and, being a faction, "will not give up its independence." On the contrary, the party faction "is determined to work out its own political line," he said.

Zatulin did not rule out the possibility that "on some issues his party will vote as the Agrarians or Communists will vote." He said that one of such issues is "another variant of reform which would not lead to the deterioration of productive forces." Zatulin said that the party may strike agreements with the Democratic Party of Russia, the Yavlinskiy Bloc and Russia's Choice.

He confirmed that the party faction will propose Shakhray to the post of State Duma speaker, adding that, according to information he has, Russia's Choice will nominate Sergey Filatov, head of the Russian presidential administration. "Of course, if he decides to quit as head of the presidential administration," he added.

The Yavlinskiy Bloc will propose Vladimir Lukin, Russian ambassador to the United States, who is one of the leaders of the bloc. Zatulin noted that according to unconfirmed reports, the Communist Party has decided against proposing to this post former Soviet parliament speaker Anatoliy Lukyanov.

As for the Federation Council, upper house of the federal assembly, Zatulin said that the heads of regional administrations who support the Party of Russian Unity and Accord may nominate to the post of the council chairman either Nikolay Gonchar, former Moscow city

council chairman, or Ramazan Abdulatipov, former chairman of the House of Nationalities of the former Russian parliament.

Zatulin said that his party prioritises tax reform and an agreement on the establishment of the confederation of the CIS countries.

He opposed the idea of live broadcasts of parliamentary sessions on television, adding that such broadcasts showing "the settling of scores between deputies" undermine the prestige of bodies of power.

Stankevich Sees 'No Future' for Zhirinovskiy

BR2212083493 Paris LE QUOTIDIEN DE PARIS in French 21 Dec 93 p 11

[Interview with Sergey Stankevich, Boris Yeltsin's former political counselor, by Pierre Celerier; place and date not given: "The Duma Will Be The Main Opposition Body"]

[Text] Sergey Stankevich, an historian who was a former political counselor to Boris Yeltsin, has been elected deputy to the Duma on the list of Vice President Sergey Shakhray. He thus was "dismissed" last Wednesday [15 December] by the Russian president. In an interview with LE QUOTIDIEN, he comments on the reasons for the relative failure of the presidential movement "Russia's Choice" and explains the consequences of these first multiparty elections on Russian political life.

[Celerier] Have the elections reinforced Boris Yeltsin's position?

[Stankevich] From a legal point of view, yes they have. The new Constitution gives him wide authority. Possibly, he can disregard Parliament's opinion. In order to cancel the president's veto of a law, a two-thirds majority is needed in both houses, which is virtually impossible to obtain. From a political point of view, however, (the elections) are a serious blow to his authority. I strongly insisted that he keep out of the electoral campaign. Despite all that, he personifies democratic and economic reforms, and it is from this viewpoint that the elections were a failure.

[Celerier] Does the new Duma appear too conservative to you?

[Stankevich] It will hardly have started its work before it becomes the main opposition body. There is a clear-cut division between the pro- and anti-reformers. Among the latter are Anatoly Lukyanov (former president of the USSR Supreme Soviet and putschist in 1991), Gennadiy Zyugannov (head of the Communist Party—PC). As for Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, I will not make a bogy out of him; he is the embodiment of the crisis that we are going through, but I see no future for him in the long term.

[Celerier] Russia's Choice has blamed your party as well as Grigory Yavlinskiy's for dividing the reformers?

[Stankevich] It is very easy to accuse others. Thanks to us, the reformers have won votes that they would have never gained otherwise. With our expansion toward the regions, we have won votes in Udmurtiya and in Baskortotsan for example. Yavlinskiy's supporters also have expressed a vote of protest against the government without casting their vote to the other side. It was a good thing that we were not united, but on the other hand, we needed better coordination.

[Celerier] Russia's Choice is the big loser. How do you account for this defeat?

[Stankevich] It underestimated the frustration within society. Its policy contrasts with facts: "We are right, we have planned everything, all we have to do is go on." It probably expected a support similar to the one it had received in the April referendum, but the social situation has deteriorated since then. This image of "braggers" has repeled many electors. Vladimir Zhirinovskiy was there to take some of them.

[Celerier] It is surprising that the reformers' camp still has no veritable party.

[Stankevich] We have too many chiefs and not enough militants. This inevitably leads to disputes about who should be leading a party. As a result, our electors always are mobilized at the last moment, just before the deadline. Paradoxically, a defeat can strengthen the existence of these reforming parties. It is impossible to merge them all into one, but a pole of influence could be created.

[Celerier] Does your resignation from the post of political counselor to the president mark the beginning of a "purge?"

[Stankevich] Two types of reshuffles can be expected. Within the presidential administration, where Boris Yeltsin likes to be surrounded by civil servants rather than representatives from the parties. In my opinion, this is commensurate with a concern for efficiency in order to eliminate what has looked like a political "mini-assembly" up to now. On the other hand, within the government, I do not see clearly what we can expect. In the short to medium term, the prime minister will have the support of those he calls "realistic pragmatists," those in favor of the market but who prefer a slower transition. But this does not question Anatoliy Chubays' position as head of privatization or Andrey Kozyrev's as head of foreign affairs. They are the most important symbols of the future of the reforms and of a pacific Russia.

[Celerier] Could Vladimir Zhirinovsky's success not harden the tone of Russian's foreign policy?

[Stankevich] For the last 15 months, I have been telling my friends in power that our policy should be adapted to the problems experienced by the Russians living in the republics. But they prefer to leave this to Zhirinovsky. Even if Andrey Kozyrev has started to view things differently—a little too late, actually. After all, it is

possible to be true to humanist values and at the same time celebrate national pride or interests.

Borovoy, Doctors Accuse LDPR of 'Political Hypnosis'

MK2112140093 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 21 Dec 93 p 14

[Mikhail Kirtser, Svetlana Reyter report: "Konstantin Borovoy's Press Conference. LDPR Accused of Subjecting Voters to Political Hypnosis"]

[Text] A group of medics made a sensational statement at a press conference organized by Economic Freedom Party leader Konstantin Borovoy yesterday that "the voters who gave their backing to the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia [LDPR] on 12 December were under a hypnotic influence." Participants in the press conference questioned the election results because the expression of the voters' will was not free.

Mr. Borovoy pointed in his address to the immorality of employing medical methods in order to influence voters, and also called such actions a flagrant violation of ethics. A group of medics, who attended the press conference, suggested that Mr. Zhirinovskiy used in his campaign addresses hypnotic codes introduced in human conscience by Anatoliy Kashpirovskiy during his televised sessions in 1989-1990. Yuriy Gornyy, a famous hypnotist, said even that he was ready to prove that political hypnosis is possible. Mr. Borovoy, however, was opposed to conducting this experiment.

Aleksandr Zubkov, LDPR representative at the Central Electoral Commission, said to your KOMMERSANT-DAILY correspondent that Kashpirovskiy's portraits and clips used to be hugely popular among the people and it is entirely possible that they had a certain influence on the voters, but this has nothing to do with medicine. A security staff member at the LDPR head office said that although Kashpirovskiy was indeed involved in the party's activity as a candidate, he did not influence the voters. He added that these rumors were fabricated by the LDPR's political rivals, who are simply envious of their more successful counterpart.

More on Claims

PM2212105993 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 22 Dec 93 p 1

[Article by Tatyana Sadkovskaya: "The People Kashpirovskiy Told What To Do"]

[Text] "The political appearances made by Zhirinovskiy and Kashpirovskiy during the 1993 election campaign—which were essentially mass hypnosis sessions—made use of Kashpirovskiy methods for influencing people....

"We believe that voters' behavior was not free.... In our view, the utilization of medical techniques and experiments for political purposes is a violation of...fundamental civil rights and freedoms."

These are quotations from a statement made by a group of medics involved in the study of hypnosis and Konstantin Borovoy, cochairman of the Economic Freedom Party.

This means that citizens who voted for the LDPR [Liberal Democratic Party of Russia] (incidentally the well-known hypnotist Professor Yuriy Gornyy claims that Russians also voted for the Constitution under the influence of hypnosis: They were also told to do this by Zhirinovskiy-Kashpirovskiy) were simply Kashpirovskiyized.

Proof? A year ago Anatoliy Kashpirovskiy (in the presence of witnesses) offered his services to Konstantin Borovoy, guaranteeing him 40-percent support among the population at the next elections. Naturally Mr. Borovoy refused. It can therefore be conjectured that his party's defeat during the very first stage of the election campaign was linked with no more and no less than the intrigues of a present-day Svengali.

By "medical techniques," it transpired, the group of gentlemen who called the news conference had in mind certain means of telehypnotic influence on an audience. Nobody said specifically what these were, arguing that this was a news conference, not a symposium. Except there was a mysterious sentence about semantic triggers identified by Alan Chumak. Incidentally, all the indications are that the same Konstantin Borovoy intends to sponsor further investigations which Chumak will make in this direction, up to and including the making of a film. But of all the magic words used by Zhirinovskiy's party as yet only the following have been made public: "I am telling you what to do."

Why did the people making this statement today not do so earlier? According to Mr. Borovoy, somebody had to summon up the courage to say something which resembles a political fantasy novel. Furthermore, some people who had been intending to sign the statement are now refusing: They have been threatened with physical reprisals.

In brief, yet another story—this time a mystical fantasy—is being offered to us to inscribe in the annals of the current election campaign. And the nature of the main character—the people—changes depending on the thrust of the story.

In the drama scenario the people are seen as having an aversion to reforms by virtue of their mentality. This does not call into the question any element of these reforms. And the shortcomings in propagandizing them committed by the reformist "Russia's Choice" movement, which did not bother to make use of knowledge of social psychology, is seen as a secondary matter.

In the tragedy scenario the people are seen as becoming committed to fascist ideas. They voted for a fuehrer, but no way for the man who, by organizing his election

campaign in a professional manner, was able to create for himself the image of a fake champion of the fatherland and the people.

The people's role in this latter—mystical fantasy—scenario is the most colorful: They're under hypnosis, end of story. Disclaiming responsibility is the simplest way to behave because it does not require any serious action—economic, social, or political—on the part of those who had been counting on a different result from the elections. Maybe those who have been hypnotized should be de-Kashpirovskiyized.

Bolshevik Party Calls For 'Anti-Fascist Front'

AU2112164393 Paris AFP in English 1633 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Moscow, Dec 21 (AFP)—The extreme communist Bolshevik Party called Tuesday [21 December] for the formation of an anti-fascist front to oppose what it called Russia's new fuehrers.

The party, which boycotted December 12 polls and condemned mainstream communists for taking part, said such a joint front was the only effective way of fighting President Boris Yeltsin.

Alexander Lapin, a senior party figure, called on "all true Russian patriots and democrats to join such a joint national front.

"If all other communists had boycotted the elections and the referendum (on December 12), Boris Yeltsin's despotic constitution would have failed," he told a press conference.

The party boycotted the December 12 polls "so as not to legitimize the massacre of the Supreme Soviet by the armed tanks of the new Russian fuehrers."

The party criticized the mainstream Communist Party of Genadiy Ziuganov for having taken part in the ballots. Ziuganov's party garnered 12 percent of the vote, or about 60 seats in the new parliament.

Meanwhile the party indicated that it could reach an accord with Vladimir Zhirinovskiy's Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) "on defending the rights of Russians living in the former Soviet Union."

"For the moment Mr. Zhirinovskiy is no more than a populist politician," said Lapin, giving no further details of how the parties could collaborate.

The Bolshevik Party claims to have a militant following of some 90,000 throughout the former Soviet Union, often in underground movements.

Smolensk TV Company Accused of Pro-Russia's Choice Bias

PM2212110993 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 22 Dec 93 p 2

[Viktor Artemenko report: "Electoral Commission Protests"]

[Text] Smolensk—A scandal has broken out in Smolensk: The district [electoral] commission and representatives of several blocs have filed protests against a biased program carried by the local television and radio broadcasting company. Their appeals have been sent to the Central Electoral Commission and to V. Shumeyko, Russian Federation minister of press and information.

This scandal was preceded by another sensation, which occurred in early November. Without coordination with the oblast administration, the Ministry of Press and Information appointed V. Meshcheryakov general director of the "Smolensk" Television and Radio Broadcasting Company. The new chief comes, as the saying goes, from a different team. He was an aide to former Governor V. Fateyev, a democrat and fervent supporter of "Russia's Choice" who was denied the Smolensk people's confidence in April. It looks as if the ministry appointed Meshcheryakov as director of the television and radio broadcasting company "to spite" current Administration Head A. Glushenkov, who was unanimously elected.

V. Meshcheryakov's appointment was prompted by ulterior motives. The point is that Ye. Gaydar appointed V. Fateyev as his deputy in October. Elections suddenly loomed ahead, and Fateyev decided to run as Federation Council candidate from Smolensk District. He needed backing.

More than enough attention was given to the "Russia's Choice" bloc and to Fateyev personally by the local electronic media. A special program on the organization and holding of the elections, broadcast two days after the elections, contained—in the precinct electoral commission's opinion—clips and materials discrediting the work of both the precinct and the district electoral commissions. The program's bias is especially noticeable in the priority allocation of airtime to just one candidate—Mr. Fateyev. Other candidates were given no such opportunity.

The district commission and the representatives of several blocs feel that the television program's premeditated attitude was impermissible and insulting. Furthermore, it also displayed an unethical approach toward voters and inadequate knowledge of some articles of the laws on elections.

International Reaction

Postpoll 'Shifts' Discernible in U.S. Policy

PM2112204593 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 22 Dec 93 First Edition p 1

[Aleksandr Shalnev report: "Is Washington Changing Its Position With Regard to Moscow?"]

[Text] Shifts [sdvigi] are becoming discernible in U.S. policy toward Russia, and this is being forced on Washington's White House by the results of the recent elections, at which, a key adviser to President Clinton on the Russian question, Strobe Talbott, admitted, a clear protest was registered against the painful burdens associated with the reforms.

At a meeting with reporters, Talbott, who has just visited Moscow as a member of Vice President Gore's entourage, made it clear that the United States will now be prepared to take notice not only of President Boris Yeltsin but also of the reformers in the opposition to the Kremlin leader. "If they satisfy our concepts of reforms," said Talbott—who is often called the "Russian czar" in Washington inasmuch as he is chief coordinator of the activities of all federal departments relating to Russia and the other countries of the former USSR—"if they come out in support of democracy, we will definitely support them."

Talbott did not mention any specific names, and what is more he very skillfully avoided a direct reply when asked if Washington had begun a review of its Russian policy, but in itself the very readiness of the Clinton administration to "look BEYOND Yeltsin" is an extremely important trend. It is very well known how insistently Bill Clinton has rejected any proposals not to put "all his eggs in one basket," as they say in America; that is, not to put all his money solely and exclusively on the Russian president, to attempt to build bridges, and to form relationships with those who do not espouse Yeltsin's reforms 100 percent.

And now we have these admissions by Talbott, who enjoys Clinton's absolute trust in terms of Russian affairs and who would hardly have made his statement spontaneously without having verified it with the feelings of the White House chief. It can be surmised that these feelings are taking shape both under the influence of the information coming from Moscow in which the election results have been deciphered, and under the influence of the observations which Talbott himself brought back from Russia.

According to the "Russian czar," Moscow must pay more attention to the social needs of Russia's inhabitants and to the development of private enterprise. For its part, the United States is planning to review its program of aid to Russia in order to take account of Russians' dissatisfaction with the economic reforms and in order to help strengthen the reformers' political positions.

One more thing: Senator Sam Nunn, Democrat, who is chairman of the Armed Services Committee, has stated that "the American side must establish contact with Zhirinovskiy, as we must maintain contacts with all the groupings in Russia." At the same time, the senator, who is one of the most influential on Capitol Hill, is opposed to Clinton's meeting with the leader of the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia when he visits Moscow in mid-January. "He is only the leader of a small, albeit potentially influential, grouping."

Experts See Country as Disquieting in East Europe

MK2112133093 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 21 Dec 93 p 4

[Report by Georgiy Bovt: "European Security and Russia. State of Minds in Former USSR Inspires Neighbors With Worry"]

[Text] The outcome of the December elections has raised many questions about the "state of minds in Russia," and the questions are likely to worsen relations between Moscow and the East Europe countries considerably. For Moscow's neighbors, the elections results have confirmed their earlier vague fears that despite the USSR's disintegration, the threat from the East has not disappeared as far as they are concerned. It is precisely this conclusion that has been arrived at by the authors of an international research project "Security for Europe: Moods of the Public and Political Options" presented on 17 December at the Russian-American Information Press Center. Special fears are being raised in Europe by Russo-Ukrainian relations, to which the authors of the study point as being the main potential source of tensions up to the point of armed conflicts.

Studies of public opinion on European security were conducted from early in 1992 and up to December of 1993 in the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Germany, Hungary, Poland, Ukraine, and Russia at the initiative of the Center for the Development of Foreign Policy at Brown University in the United States. The main conclusion: Europeans are confident of the absence of a military threat to them today. They see the West as a guarantee against a possible threat from the East in the future (even before the Russian elections, 58 percent of Czechs, 40 percent of Hungarians, and almost the same number of Poles pinned their hopes on NATO in this connection while the number of those sharing this view was growing). In the Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, and Poland people are generally much more worried than their eastern neighbors precisely by the external than by the internal factors that constitute a threat to their national security. Alongside a military threat, East Europeans fear ecological disasters, in particular at nuclear electric power stations, immigration from the former USSR, as well as the rise of the "international mafia."

As for the majority of people in Russia and Ukraine, they believe that a much greater threat to their national

security emanates from internal factors: At least as recently as six months ago, this was believed by 55 percent of people in Russia (against 20 percent of those having a fear of the "abroad"), and 40 percent of Ukrainians (against 27 percent). In the meantime, experts point out that the number of those who would like to have their countries turned into "beleaguered fortresses" may grow considerably. In Russia's case this would mean a bigger electoral support for the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia and for the Communist Party.

In Eastern Europe they believe that security in the region depends on relations between Moscow and Kiev. This would have appeared absurd only a short time ago to both the Russians and Ukrainians. But disturbing tendencies have emerged of late in public opinion: In Ukraine there is a dramatically growing number of advocates of keeping the nuclear weapons. In 1992, they numbered 13 percent (with 78 advocating unconditional disarmament). By the middle of 1993 as many as 36 percent did not want to part with the missiles, with a further 41 percent clamoring for security guarantees from Russia in payment for disarmament. Only 8 percent were in favor of the unconditional "denuclearization" of Ukraine. At the same time, 31 percent of Ukrainians fear "Russia's imperial ambitions."

As for Russia, its neighbors' fears are raised by the fact that the number of people in Russia thinking that parts of the neighbor countries are in fact Russian soil has grown from 22 percent to 36 percent in the past two years. Today as little as 5 percent of people in Russia think that Crimea should remain part of Ukraine (48 percent unambiguously support the view that Crimea is a part of Russia). True, some optimism is inspired by the fact that most people in Russia and Ukraine are still inclined to see tensions in relations between the two countries as being artificially created by politicians who are using the "nationality card" to divert the masses of people primarily from the economic plight.

The experts of eight countries think that the solution of the European security problem is on the whole in a blind alley today. Not the least of which is owing to the fact that while a post-communist mentality in the former USSR is yet to take its final shape, it is showing a number of dangerous tendencies in its development. Should these tendencies prevail, Europe will be threatened with going back to being split into hostile blocs.

Japanese Paper Says Zhirinovskiy Funded by German Party

PM2112144393 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 21 Dec 93 First Edition p 4

[Sergey Agafonov report: "Where Zhirinovskiy Gets His Money"]

[Text] Tokyo—After the staggeringly unexpected results of the Russian elections the Japanese public, with unconcealed curiosity mingled with peculiarly oriental squeamishness, has been trying to probe the Russian political quagmire in the light of the new historical turn of events. Understandably, the main attention is focused on the daring man in the bow tie who has made an unprecedentedly powerful dash from the ranks of political "also-rans" to the heights of television, photographic, and all kinds of other fame.

However, Japanese assessments of the "Zhirinovskiy phenomenon" will scarcely seem fresh and original—they chime in with the general Western view and even show greater restraint in their choice of epithets and definitions regarding the Liberal Democratic leader. Japanese emotions about his remarks and views cannot be described as out of the ordinary either—the natural worried reaction to an adventurist making a successful bid for the political heights in an adjoining country. On the other hand Japanese knowledge about Zhirinovskiy is based on facts that Vladimir Volfovich is himself clearly reluctant to recall.

A couple of days ago SANKEI SHIMBUN, a newspaper known for its conservative sympathies, published a big feature about Zhirinovskiy whose "highlight" was a piece by Maeda, the paper's Berlin correspondent. The piece is short but it sheds some light on the "mystery of the century"—the sources of funding for the Russian LDP's [Liberal Democratic Party's] election campaign. According to SANKEI, much of the money came into the Liberal Democrat coffers from Germany, specifically from a right-wing nationalist German party, the DVU [German People's Union], with which Zhirinovskiy maintains both close political and close commercial relations.

SANKEI drew attention to the fact that Zhirinovskiy granted one of his first interviews after the Russian elections to the party's press organ, and the questions were put not by an ordinary reporter but by party leader Gerhard Frey. According to SANKEI, Zhirinovskiy's last foreign trip before the elections was also connected with his German fellow militant nationalists—in October the head of the Russian LDP was a guest at the party congress in Munich, where he promised to restore Russia's friendly ties with Prussia and to repartition Poland together with his German friends. As SANKEI's Berlin correspondent, who obviously has a substantial file on Zhirinovskiy's German connections, notes, in a number of public speeches in recent months Gerhard Frey has mentioned as a major achievement the swift development of contacts with Zhirinovskiy's party and has openly said that the DVU is giving active financial assistance to its new friends.

Another discovery by the Japanese mass media on the "Zhirinovskiy theme" is also worth noting. It has been disclosed by the Moscow correspondents of a number of Japanese publications, who did plenty of work on personnel of their beloved Japanese Embassy in Moscow. It

transpires that the extremely ardent Russian patriot in a bow tie has by no means always been so irrepressibly ardent and categorical. For instance, just two years ago, in a conversation in June with Japanese Ambassador to the USSR Mr. Edamura, Zhirinovskiy advocated...the return to Japan of the four disputed islands of the South Kurils. The details of this episode according to the Japanese account are as follows: Zhirinovskiy personally called the Japanese Embassy several times seeking a meeting with the ambassador; his persistence paid off, and Vladimir Volfovich, accompanied by two comrades, obtained an audience with the ambassador; during the conversation, which was punctiliously minuted by Japanese diplomats, Zhirinovskiy criticized Gorbachev, described the territorial problem in bilateral relations as a legacy of Stalin's diplomacy, described the lack of a peace treaty between the two countries as abnormal, and called for a cardinal improvement in relations, which should be promoted by the unconditional return of the "northern territories" to Japan.

Local newspapers write that Japanese diplomats recalled this visit and were greatly astonished when in the fall of 1992 Zhirinovskiy turned up outside the embassy on a demonstration by the public committee in defense of the Kurils. The surprise has developed into something more now that the LDP leader has fully unfolded his approach to the territorial problem and is declaring that no such problem exists at all and Russia has no superfluous lands. Zhirinovskiy is no longer seeking to be received by the Japanese ambassador and is promising the Japanese Hiroshima all over again because of their persistence in the territorial suit—in this connection pragmatic Japanese analysts are wondering: Is the top Liberal Democrat losing sleep at night over his former declarations?

Ukrainians Assess Elections, Set Goals

AU2112131593 Kiev MOLOD UKRAYINY in Ukrainian 17 Dec 93 p 1

[Olena Hubina report: "Kuchma in Alliance With Hrynyov and Russia"]

[Text] The interregional Bloc of Reforms recently created by two presidents—the president of the Ukrainian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs Leonid Kuchma and the president of the "Active Diaspora Fund" Volodymyr Hrynyov—is based on three principles: Implementation of economic market reforms, provision of more power for regions, and union with Russia. The latter principle was not influenced by the results of the parliamentary elections in the neighboring country because, in the opinion of the two leaders, relations with Russia must not depend on immediate considerations. A certain "cold war" situation has taken shape around Ukraine, one wherein we have practically no allies. Russia is the only state that supplied us, interest-free, with energy sources for a whole year. That is why, today, as was the case one year ago, we must decide whether to adopt political decisions in that regard.

According to Volodymyr Hrynyov, the most disappointing result of the Russian elections is not in Zhirinovskiy's victory, but in that the centrist democratic forces lost. In Ukraine, democratic changes can only be expected if centrist democratic forces gain a perceptible victory. Neither president rules out the possibility of forming an alliance with yet another political preelection formation that has arisen around Rukh [Ukraine's People's Movement]. Although it is quite possible that our Democrats will long be tortured by the question of who must join whom: Either we must join them or they—us." That is why Leonid Kuchma assumes that Rukh candidates for deputies may be their competitors in electoral districts.

Kuchma and Hrynyov see parliamentary elections as being the main stage. Speaking about his future participation in the presidential campaign, Hrynyov explains that, for him, it is not posts that are important, but the implementation of ideas. Unless there is a competent parliament, presidential elections will be almost meaningless. Leonid Kuchma reiterated that, for the time being, he was not going to run for president and that his future positive decision may result from some extraordinary event—such as if, for example, Hrynyov were to give up his struggle for the presidency. However, only after elections will it be possible to speak of any decisions.

Belarus Servicemen Issue Appeal Over Zhirinovskiy

WS2112125593 Minsk RID in Belarusian 0840 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Belarus may be entangled in a military conflict, warns the Belarusian Association of Servicemen [BZV] Executive Council in the "Appeal to the Nation of Belarus", that has been handed over to RID.

The council expresses its concern over the electoral victory of Russian fascist parties headed by Zhirinovskiy. The open threats voiced by the leader of the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia against almost all countries neighboring Russia can lead to a war on the territory of the former USSR, or even to international conflict, in which Belarus could be entangled. The appeal regards Russian nuclear weapons deployed on Belarusian territory as a direct hazard. Among other measures, BZV proposes that the Supreme Soviet appeal to the international community to legally proclaim the neutrality of the Republic. To survive, we need guarantees that we do not become hostages to experiments of the great Eastern neighbor, says the appeal.

Lithuania's Slezevicius Concerned by Results

LD2212093293

[Editorial Report] Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian at 0016 GMT on 22 December carries a Vilnius-datelined report on an interview with Lithuanian Prime Minister Adolfas Slezevicius by ITAR-TASS correspondent Vladas Burbulis.

Burbulis introduces his interview with Slezevicius by referring to his biography and professional experience. Asked whether he is President Algirdas Brazauskas' puppet, the Lithuanian prime minister says: "Let me just say one thing: I am responsible for the work of the government and for the way things are in Lithuania, and that is why I act independently. Of course, decisions are adopted jointly at our Cabinet sittings. No one puts pressure on me, and the president is no exception here. I try to be my own man."

Slezevicius says that his cabinet has inherited a difficult economic situation but has managed to stabilize the situatuion and to curb inflation. "We introduced our national currency and the Russian Army was withdrawn from the territory of Lithuania. The Lithuanian state became a member of the Council of Europe and its international prestige grew," Slezevicius says. He adds that wages, pensions, and disability benefits are increasing, and exports have increased. The national countryside development program must be implemented to reverse the Sajudis' disastrous policies in this area, he stresses.

Replying to a question on relations between Lithuania and Russia, Adolfas Slezevicius says: They are correct, respectful, good-neighborly, and mutually advantageous, and recalls the agreements recently signed during Russian Premier Viktor Chernomyrdin's visit to Vilnius.

He adds that he regards the results of the meetings between the Lithuanian and Russian presidents in Moscow as important. "We welcome the adoption of a new Russian Constitution which makes it possible for President Boris Yeltsin to continue democratic transformations in that great country. However, the results of the Russian parliamentary elections do worry us, but we believe in the Russian Federation's democratic forces and in President Yeltsin," Slezevicious stresses.

Slezevicius hopes that "relations between our countries in the coming year will develop on a mutually advantageous, equal basis, without pressure from a stronger partner. There are all the prerequisites for this. Russia is Lithuania's most important economic and trade partner and we do take account of this in our foreign policy. Reciprocity on Moscow's part would be desirable."

Slezevicius adds: "Lithuania threatens no one and has no territorial claims on its neighbors. We strive for good-neighborliness with everyone. Our foreign policy is based on the building of a bridge between the West and the East, and on non-interference in other countries' internal affairs."

In conclusion, the Lithuanian prime minister says he is pleased that Germany, the Scandinavian states, the United States, Great Britain, and other countries have become Lithuania's serious economic partners.

Brazauskas, Envoys Comment

LD2112232293 Vilnius Radio Vilnius in International Service in Lithuanian 2200 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] According to Lithuanian President Algirdas Brazauskas, unpredictable events are taking place in Russia. They must not be evaluated in an offhand manner.

He took part in an annual meeting of the heads of Lithuanian diplomatic missions on Tuesday [21 December] in Vilnius. Brazauskas said the situation in Russia must be observed and evaluated soberly, without prejudice. The Lithuanian president categorically rejected accusations that Lithuania was returning to the fold of Russia and that secret negotiations were taking place with Russia. Such accusations have been often made by the opposition forces. Brazauskas stressed he was giving priority to the principle of flexible diplomacy. Balanced policies and friendly relations with the former Soviet Union's states guarantee the support of Western states, too, said the president.

According to the Lithuanian ambassador to the United States, Alfonsas Eidintas, an increasing Western interest in the Baltic states after Zhirinovskiy's success creates favorable conditions to raise the issue of the guarantees of their security. The ambassador is taking part in the meeting of the heads of the Lithuanian diplomatic missions that opened in Vilnius on Tuesday. It deals with the country's domestic and foreign policy.

At a news conference, the Lithuanian ambassador to the European Community, Adolfas Venckus, stated that the success of the chauvinist forces in the Russian elections would not influence the prospects of Lithuania's membership in NATO.

Ambassador to Germany Zenonas Namavicius is convinced the success of the imperialists will not bring Lithuania closer to NATO, but may give it a push toward the European Union.

Meanwhile the Lithuanian ambassador to Moscow, Romualdas Kozyrovicius, claims not having noticed changes in Moscow's policy toward the Baltic states after the Russian elections. But he has warned officials at the Russian Foreign Ministry that Vilnius would react through diplomatic channels if the leader of the Russian liberal democrats repeats his escapades against Lithuania.

Lithuanian Foreign Minister Povilas Gylys regarded as the most important events this year Lithuania's admission to the Council of Europe and the withdrawal of the Russian Army. According to the minister, a turning point in Lithuania's relations with other Baltic states took place this year. Lithuania now maintains diplomatic relations with 86 countries.

U.S., Ukraine, Russia To Sign Tripartite Nuclear Accord

LD2212092093 Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian 0600 GMT 22 Dec 93

[From the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] The United States, Russia, and Ukraine will sign a tripartite agreement with regard to compensating Ukraine for the removal of its nuclear weapons and also security guarantees. This has been announced to journalists in Kiev by Ukraine President Leonid Kravchuk.

In his words, reports Interfax, this will be an agreement which will not affect the interests of any state. He also confirmed that 17 SS-24 missiles have been stood down from combat duty. The president said that they cannot be used, even by Russia.

Burbulis Attends International Conference on Europe

LD2112120293 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1144 GMT 21 Dec 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Nikolay Kalintsev and Georgiy Shmelev]

[Text] Moscow December 21 TASS—"We must learn the alphabet of coalition activities in parliament now without changing the values and principles by which we are abiding," said prominent politician Gennadiy Burbulis, member of the "Big Europe" commission and president of the "strategy" centre for humanitarian and political studies.

Burbulis is taking part in a two-day conference of an international non-government commission "Big Europe" which is completing its work.

"We must develop a new political style and learn a new coalition political conduct," Burbulis said. "It presupposes, in particular, the ability of a more loyal conduct to each other taking into account the present distribution of forces in parliament," he pointed out.

Burbulis came out for Viktor Chernomyrdin's government to remain in office. He said that this government should be left in office provided it has clear-cut aims and guarantees of translating them into reality. Burbulis believes that "the Yeltsin-Chernomyrdin" bloc makes up one element of stability and the "Gaydar-Fedorov" bloc—another element of stability in Russia.

Cooperation With E[illegible] Discussed

LD2112185493 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1438 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] At its sessions held in Moscow December 20-21 the Commission "Great Europe" discussed prospects of economic cooperation between Russia and the European Union [EU] and problems of European security, Russian Vice Premier and Vice President of the commission Anatoliy Chubays reported on Tuesday. Chairman of the Liberal International and leader of the German Free Democratic Party Otto Lambsdorf, Austria's Foreign Minister Alois Mock, member of the presidential council Yevgeniy Ambarthumov, St. Petersburg Mayor Anatoliy Sobchak, and others participated in the work of this commission..

Addressing journalists, Lambsdorf spoke in favor of close cooperation between the Russian Federation and the European Union. At the same time he believes that it is inexpedient for Russia to enter the European Union both from the political and economic points of view because it will be difficult for the domestic economy, which is experiencing hard times, to compete with the economies of Europe's most advanced countries. "Russia must receive access to European markets and goods. This is the main thing," believes Lambsdorf.

He categorically rejected statements saying that reforms under implementation had caused the present economic difficulties in Russia. In his opinion, this is the result of communist ideology which was indoctrinated over the course of many years. Lambsdorf reported that members of the commission had decided to continue transformations in Russia because slowing down of economic reforms could still aggravate the situation. He also believes that inflation is the major issue to be solved as soon as possible.

Former Bloc Countries' Communications Chiefs Meet

PM2112114193 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 21 Dec 93 First Edition p 2

[Unattributed report: "Plus Electrification of the Globe"]

[Text] The improvement of the world structure of electronic communications was the subject of discussion at a colloquium of the International Electronic Communications Union which opened in Moscow yesterday and involves leaders of communications administrations of Central and East European and also Central Asian countries.

Questions concerning the policy, strategy, and stages of restructuring of electronic communications in various countries were also examined during the colloquium. In particular, there was an exchange of opinions on concepts such as autonomy, liberalization, the quality of consumer services, and international partnership.

CIS Leaders To Hold Summit in Ashgabat

Agenda Released

LD2112221093 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2053 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] The tentative agenda, approved by the CIS Executive Secretariat, of the CIS summit to be held in Ashgabat on December 24 [as received] was made available to Interfax. It includes 12 items:

1. Application of the Economic Union Treaty prior to its ratification by parliaments.

2. Coordination of investment activities. The prime ministers will have to approve the draft before the presidents discuss it.

3. Coordination of pricing and taxing policies. This issue will also have first to be discussed by heads of government.

4. Urgent steps to implement the May 15, 1992 Collective Security Treaty. Before specific steps are taken, the Collective Security Council will have to discuss numerous important documents. Some CIS member states object to inclusion of this item into the agenda and so experts do not rule out the possibility that it will be left out.

5. Guidelines on the medal devoted to the 50th anniversary of the V-day, its description and financing of its coinage.

6. Guidelines on plenipotentiaries of CIS member states in its bodies.

7. International guarantees of safe and independent operation of the Mir TV and radio company.

8. Guidelines on non-citizens of CIS member states service in the armed forces of those states.

9. Convention on the rights of members of national, ethnic, language, cultural and religious minorities.

10. Supply of medicinal drugs, vaccines and other immunobiological preparations, medical articles and medical equipment manufactured in CIS member states to the population.

11. Ashgabat declaration on development of cooperation and confidence building in the relations between CIS member states. Adoption of this document was proposed by Turkmenistan's President Saparmurad Niyazov. The declaration draft reaffirms the principles guiding the interaction between CIS member states that have been formulated in the CIS founding documents and Charter.

12. The venue and time of the next meeting of the CIS Council of Heads of State.

CIS Secretary Comments

LD2112140293 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1147 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Several issues, in particular, on cooperation in the sphere of investment policy, on common provisions and mechanisms to support development of industrial cooperation and direct contacts between enterprises and various branches of industry, and on a coordinated anti-monopoly policy pursued by the Commonwealth's countries, should be solved for implementation of the treaty on creation of an economic union, CIS executive secretary Ivan Korotchenya, on a visit in Ashgabat, reported to Interfax.

In his opinion, the issue of a coordinated anti-monopoly policy can bring about "certain debates" at the December 23-24 summit of CIS heads of states but "at the same time, they must be resolved, otherwise there will be no movement forward."

"Coordination of policy in the sphere of prices and taxes is the most important issue," believes Korotchenya. The overwhelming majority of states are ready to solve it and sign a corresponding document, and at the same time "there are two or three states which are dissatisfied with something." In particular, Russia believes that deliveries of raw materials should be carried out at world prices, not at agreed prices as other states propose, all of which are major consumers of Russian raw materials. "If the upcoming summit does not solve Russia's proposal on world prices, Moscow will ask to annul this issue," reported Korotchenya.

Drafts of constituent documents on aid to Tajikistan are on the agenda of the summit. Korotchenya reported that an idea arose in the Turkmenian government, namely not to restrict activity to Tajikistan but to create a single charity fund which will receive funds from public and governmental sources. The accumulated funds could be allocated according to the decision of the head of state to this or that country. "At the same time," Korotchenya continued, "somebody is afraid of such a fund, because if there is a centralized fund then there can appear something else." That is why Korotchenya believes that constituent documents of this fund could cause a lot of debate.

Speaking about his meeting with the Turkmenian president held December 20, Korotchenya reported that "Saparmarad Niyazov advocates strengthening of the Commonwealth." As Korotchenya said, Niyazov declared that "there is no alternative to the Commonwealth. The CIS has not fulfilled its historic role yet." At the same time Niyazov reaffirmed that he rejects any supra-state structures to which a country would give part of its sovereignty.

When asked about the summit's schedule, the executive secretary reported that CIS Defense Ministers would hold negotiations with their own agenda December 22 in

Ashgabat. Joint talks between defense and foreign ministers are due to start at 16:00 on December 23. A session of the coordinating economic committee is to begin just after these talks. Heads of the governments are to attend this session. The session is to last until 20:00.

In the morning of December 24 the heads of states will meet behind the closed doors for approximately an hour and a half. In the afternoon heads of states, governments, and members of the delegations will hold their final meetings.

Russia's Shokhin on Payment Union

LD2112151793 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1357 GMT 21 Dec 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Ivan Ivanov]

[Text] Moscow December 21 TASS—"Measures to create a Commonwealth payment union will be the core of economic discussion in Ashgabat," Russian Vice-Premier Aleksandr Shokhin told a news conference here today, commenting on the Commonwealth summit due to be held on December 23-24 in the Turkmen capital.

"The introduction of national currencies in Commonwealth states is not accompanied by adequate measures to normalize payment relations," which results in difficulties in Commonwealth trade and economic relations, said Shokhin.

In his words, President Boris Yeltsin will sign a decree in the immediate future to give the government and the Ministry of Finance a possibility to allocate the long-promised 400 billion roubles as credits to Commonwealth nations.

Speaking of the Russian parliament elections of December 12, the vice-premier said their results showed to Commonwealth states the Russian stand on them is not as tough as they think, it is a normal stand.

As for the second anniversary of the Commonwealth of Independent States marked in December, Shokhin noted life has proved the vitality of the new organization. Independence of Commonwealth nations appeared to be a political basis for enhanced integration processes.

Commonwealth member-states have understood the unity of politics and the economy: One cannot quickly solve economic problems without the functioning of political factors, including those related to partial refusal from national sovereignty and unification of legislation.

"Human dimension" and protection of citizens' rights were included into major factors used by Commonwealth leaders in solution of various problems. Shokhin stressed Russia does not condition any economic agreements on position of ethnic Russians in commonwealth states, "although there is some connection between the two things".

In his opinion, it is expedient to introduce Russian as the second state language in Commonwealth nations to settle many artificially exaggerated problems and serve for the benefit "of these states, their peaceful and stable development and normal relations with neighbours".

Russian Spokesman Cited

LD2112200093 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1745 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] The Russian-Turkmen agreements on double citizenship and regulation of migration processes, on the frontier issues and on cooperation in the sphere of geodesy and cartography are to be signed during the brief visit of Russian President Boris Yeltsin to Turkmenistan on December 23. This was announced by an official representative of the Russian Foreign Ministry, Grigoriy Karasin, at a briefing in Moscow on Tuesday [21 December].

According to him, "an exchange of opinions on Russian-Turkmen relations and perspectives on their development, the situation in the Central Asian region, in Tajikistan and surroundings will take place during the meeting between Boris Yeltsin and Turkmen President Saparmurad Niyazov."

The Foreign Ministry's representative also announced that the parties would also exchange letters of ratification to the state treaty on friendship and cooperation.

In accordance with the schedule, the Russian official delegation headed by the president is to arrive on December 23 at 12:30. The meeting between the Russian and the Turkmen presidents will be held from 13:10 till 14:10. The governmental negotiations and the meeting of the groups of experts will take place simultaneously. Thereafter the bilateral agreements are to be signed and a joint press conference is to be held.

The draft treaties on frontier defense and the status of Russian frontier guards, on migration and on double citizenship are expected to be discussed.

The official opening of the Russian Embassy in Ashgabat will also take place during the visit.

Kazakhstan's Missiles To Be Discussed

PM2112154493 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 22 Dec 93 First Edition p 1

[Boris Vinogradov report: "The Fate of Kazakhstan's Nuclear Warheads May Be Decided in Ashgabat"]

[Text] At the meeting of CIS leaders in Ashgabat, Boris Yeltsin and Nursultan Nazarbayev will meet face to face to discuss the question of the status of the strategic nuclear forces that are on Kazakhstan's territory.

Almaty is proposing the formation of a joint command. Moscow has rejected this idea, because it would be a violation of its international commitments.

There is general satisfaction that the Ukrainian option of "privatization" of strategic missiles did not start a trend. The Kazakh parliament, at its recent session, ratified the treaty on the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons.

At the same time Russia looked on jealously at the U.S.-Kazakh agreement, signed 13 December, on the safe dismantling of nuclear warheads belonging to the strategic arsenal of the former USSR. Washington promised to grant Almaty $84 million out of the total sum of $1.2 billion allocated by the U.S. Congress to the CIS countries for these purposes. Russia, which has great experience in such operations, had expected to find a common language with Kazakhstan and do the dismantling itself.

In formal terms, all 108 SS-18 missiles stationed in Kazakhstan, and the 1,400 warheads, are Russia's property. The total value of their nuclear contents, after dismantling and reprocessing, will amount to about $1 billion. The world uranium market is strictly limited by IAEA [International Atomic Energy Agency] guidelines. But the Americans would like to buy all the uranium left after the warheads are dismantled, and have made it clear to Kazakhstan that money is no object.

Almaty, having willingly renounced the status of a nuclear power, expects to receive compensation for the missiles. Nursultan Nazarbayev's edict banning the exportation from the republic of anything that is on its territory applies not only to missiles, but also to weapons [zaryady] that have been taken off alert status. Kazakhstan's storage facilities are packed with nuclear ammunition.

Russia is willing to share, but insists that the dismantling and the uranium reprocessing takes place at its own plants. Ukraine's uncompromising position cannot but influence Kazakhstan's behavior. Kiev has decided, by the end of this year, to remove all the warheads from 20 SS-24 ICBM's, and to keep them. But Ukraine also does not have the plants and technology for reprocessing the uranium, which it could use as fuel for its five nuclear power stations.

After the Russian elections, the former certainty that the safest course is to ship all the former USSR's nuclear weapons to Russia's territory is not shared by everyone. Russia may come up against more persistent claims from Ukraine and Kazakhstan to keep the nuclear weapons.

It has yet to be decided how Kazakhstan's warheads will be dismantled and by what means their uranium content will be sold.

Kazakhstan's Nazarbayev Previews Session

LD2112150693 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1441 GMT 21 Dec 93

[By KAZTAG for TASS]

[Text] Pavlodar December 21 TASS—Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev said here today they stand for single economic space in the Commonwealth of Independent States.

In his words, the Kazakh side will put forward new initiatives in this area at the upcoming Commonwealth summit in Ashgabat. This does not mean the end to close cooperation with Russia and economic union as result of the introduction of national currencies in the Commonwealth states. On the contrary, this should consolidate their equal partnership.

Asked about a possibility to introduce double citizenship in the republic, Nazarbayev said it is not expedient against the background of multi-national society. The problem is not acute as Commonwealth citizens have full freedom to travel due to transparent borders, can choose any place to live and enjoy all the rights.

There is no language problem in Kazakhstan, although some people try to play on it, stressed Nazarbayev.

Turkmenistan's Niyazov Notes Hopes

LD2112221593 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2053 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Turkmenistan's President said in an interview with the Izvestiya newspaper Tuesday night [21 December] that the CIS could not function properly because it lacks the main component, constructive reasoning and multilateral consultations.

"The whole world is held together by a thoroughly tested system of international links that are managed by a legal mechanism. In the context of a transition period this function could be performed, above all, by bilateral links that make it possible to recognize to the maximal possible degree the needs of states and the specifics of their development," Niyazov said.

The president expressed the hope that the upcoming CIS summit in Ashgabat would "break the ice of formalities in the relations within the CIS whose development is handicapped by the desire to live on somebody else's money, suspicion and a simplistic approach to inter-state links."

Speaking of the initiatives his country intended to propose at the summit, Niyazov explained that the key idea was cooperation on equal terms in a system of international relations.

He emphasized that understanding with Russia had improved. "Russia is our most important partner in military cooperation enabling us to effectively tackle military and border issues. All contacts have been significantly augmented," the president noted.

Niyazov expressed his regret that Russian partners were not active in Turkmenistan's markets, notably the oil and gas market. "We have nothing to quarrel about here. We have made it clear in our concept of developing the oil and gas industry until the year 2020. This program cannot materialize without Russia, its capital, its firms, its powerful scientific and industrial potential participating in it for mutual benefit," the Turkmen president said.

Niyazov emphasized that the two sides intend to work out a specific action program during Russian President Yeltsin's stay in Ashgabat on December 23.

CIS Defense Ministers Open Session in Ashgabat

LD2212114093 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1101 GMT 22 Dec 93

[By ITAR-TASS special correspondent Vladimir Gondusov]

[Text] Ashgabat December 22 TASS—A 2-day meeting of the Council of CIS Defence Ministers opened here today afternoon. It is being attended by military delegations from all the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States, except Moldova.

Russian Defence Minister Pavel Grachev told journalists at the airport here that he hoped the Ashgabat meeting would be able to "resolve many serious problems linked with military cooperation." Grachev noted that the ministers would have to discuss today problems of reorganising the supreme command of the CIS Joint Forces, the situation in the Commonwealth's hot spots, primarily Tajikistan.

"The supreme command of the CIS Joint Armed Forces is expected to be replaced by an H.Q. with considerably curtailed powers," ITAR- TASS was told on Tuesday [21 December] by Leonid Ivashov, secretary of the Council of CIS Defence Ministers.

"The supreme command was a military directive body responsible to the Council of CIS Heads of State, while the headquarters will be a coordinating military structure responsible to the Council of Defence Ministers," he explained.

"The H.Q. will be vested with much smaller powers and its staff will be cut," Ivashov added.

In Ashgabat the defence ministers are also expected to consider candidates to the post of secretary-general of the Council of Collective Security and to discuss the mechanism of implementing the collective security treaty, in particular the rules for the admission of new members.

The most complicated issue to be discussed is that of financing the CIS Joint Armed Forces. According to Ivashov, Russia had to cut its share in the budget of the Joint Armed Forces from 70 to 50 per cent due to inflation in Russia and increased pay to servicemen.

Head of the CIS peace-keeping force in Tajikistan Boris Pyankov will report to the defence ministers on the use of the force in that Central Asian republic.

Ivashov said that "serious talks" were expected in Ashgabat on the fulfilment by CIS states of the agreement on collective peace- keeping forces.

ITAR-TASS Carries Press Review for 21 Dec

LD2112075493 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0725 GMT 21 Dec 93

["Press Review"—ITAR-TASS headline]

[Text] Moscow December 21 TASS— ROSSIISKAYA GAZETA carries an interview with Mikhail Poltoranin, director of Russia's Federal Information Centre, who wonders why did the Russian people, who had lost tens of millions of human lives in the battle against fascism and who went through the horrors of the gulag, opted, through a free voting, for the terrible road backwards, to the past, and not forward, towards democratic values.

A large proportion of the electorate, together with the Communists and the Agrarian Party, who repudiate reforms, voted in favour of the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia (LDPR).

"Do our people really pine for the frozen trenches, barbed wire entanglements and long queues to buy bread?" Poltoranin asked, and answered "it is hardly so". He believes that "the people turn back because they do not see distinct and attractive landmarks ahead".

ROSSISKIYE VESTI on the results of the recent voting in Tatarstan on the draft new constitution:

Iskander Yusupov, permanent representative of the Republic of Tatarstan to the president of the Russian Federation, points out as folllows: "Sovereignty is not a mere declaration by the republic's politicians but is the cornerstone of our socio-political life. After this notion has disappeared from the draft new constitution of the Russian Federation, it is senseless, in our view, to express one's attitude to this constitution: the people of Tatarstan just do not apprehend it."

NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA (INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER) on the results of elections to a new Russian parliament:

"One cannot say anything definite about future party coalitions in the State Duma—the blocs that have been elected to it are apparently waiting to see what the correlation of forces will be. However, it can be, perhaps, said already now who will preside over the Duma meetings until it elects a permanent speaker. It can be supposed that a speaker will not be elected soon: it is known that the leaders of the largest factions, which at the same time do not have a steady majority, aspire for the position of the Duma chairman".

The newspaper believes that the Duma's presidium will be headed by LDPR representative Georgiy Lukava, who is the Duma's eldest member.

KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA runs an interview with Tajik parliament chief Imamali Rakhmamov. In response to a question about Tajik-Afghan relations, Rakhmanov said as follows: "We have succeeded in bringing home a half of our compatriots. As far as

tranquility on the border is concerned, it depends not only on our desire to achieve peace".

KOMSOMOLSAKAYA PRAVDA carries an interview with Colonel Vladimir Dobrovolskiy, deputy head of the Moscow city military registration and enlistment office, who comments on the state of affairs in the draft campaign. He believes that the provision of the presidential decree lifting deferments for a certain proportion of draft-age young people is "socially unfair". There have been instances when students sued enlistment offices, regarding their actions as illegitimate. Enlistment offices' personnel have long noted yet another injustice: young workers account for almost 90 percent of Moscow recruts. It is practically impossible to find the sons of businessmen or bankers among recruites.

KRASNAYA ZVEZDA (RED STAR) on the state of affairs in the defence sector.

The newspaper carries an interview with Mikhail Maley, who was a presidential adviser in the recent past and who is now the chairman of the inter-agency commission. "A further passive attitude to the needs of the defence sector poses a real danger both to President Yeltsin's authority and to the entire national economy. There exists an opinion that the defence sector bears heavily on the economy and the Russian people. I can say that the defence sector renounces budget-provided funds altogether but requests permission for export operations on the world markets. In so doing, the sector guarantees that the Defence Ministry will be provided with the best equipment."

KRASNAYA ZVEZDA runs an article by Vadim Kirpichenko, head of the group of consultatns to the director of Russia's Foreign Intelligence Service. Kirpichenko emphasises as follows: "We are convinced that control by the legislative and executive branches of power over inteligence activities is utterly essential. Control, which should be exercised, naturally, without detriment to the security of intelligence operations, is to guarantee the use of the intelligence service to ensure precisely the national interests of the country, rule out the possibility of abuses on the part of individual officials and to lend lawfulness to our actions".

KRASNAYA ZVEZDA carries an interview with Vladimir Salo, head of the Economics Ministry's Department of the Defence Sector Economics and Conversion. He said "a list of state-run enterprises and organisations not subject to privatisation has not yet been confirmed. The list is expected to include from 350 to 500 enterprises that constitute the backbone of the defence sector."

SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA runs four diagrams showing the level of per capita consumption of a number of food products by people in Russia prior to reforms and within the period of 1991-1992. "Unfortunately, there are still no final data for 1993 but expert estimate is that the nourishment situation continues to deteriorate on average".

PRAVDA comments on the results of U.S. Vice-Presdient Albert Gore's visit to Russia. The newspaper's opinion is that the visit went off "somewhat imperceptibly". "The blurred visit of Mr Gore is accounted for by the fact that the United States, just as during the days of Mikhail Gorbachev, has found itself at a political crossroads. More than 80 per cent of Russian voters rejected the policy of Russia's Choice bloc. Meanwhile the WASHIGTON POST newspaper had described the bloc as the most radical pro-Western group which was so firmly supported by the Clinton administration. The U.S. apparently has now come to ponder over its prior choice."

The St. Petersburg-based NEVSKOYE VREMYA newspaper reports that St. Petersburg and Finnish guardians of law and order have adopted an agreement to join hands in the fight against crime. The agreement, which is to take effect early next year, is the chief result of Finnish Deputy Interior Minister Juhani Perttunen's visit to St. Petersburg.

Press Review for 22 Dec

LD2212072393 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0649 GMT 22 Dec 93

["Press Review"—ITAR-TASS headline]

[Text] Moscow December 22 TASS—The press continues to highlight the outcome of the recent elections and subsequent developments in the socio-political life of the country.

ROSSISKIYE VESTI on the state of affairs in the light of election results:

"Analysing the results of the recent meeting of the government presidium and the course of the discussion there, analysts note that dreams of forming a government as a concerted pro-reform team will apparently have to be postponed. At best, one can now speak about creating an efficient coalition of professionals.

"The first post-election government meeting has shown that it is very difficult for cabinet members, who affiliate to a broad spectrum of political blocs, to reach consensus. The political situation has an obvious coalition-like nature of the government, which will, for certain, make decision-making process difficult and tell on the effectiveness of its work."

NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA (INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER) on the lack of official election results:

"There are no final official results of elections to the State Duma up to now. There are, obviously, objective reasons for that, such as this, which is believed to be the main one: delays in presentation of electoral documents due to transportation problems.

"Election protocols have not yet come from the district electoral commissions of the Chukotka Peninsula, Sakhalin Island, and the Nenets Autonomous District

owing to weather unfit for flying. Another weighty reason is that in some cases election protocols were improperly processed from the legal point of view and had to be sent back for reprocessing.

"Besides, electoral associations, which, according to preliminary election results, are allowed to distribute mandates won under the proportionate representation scheme are now busy making final adjustments of their party lists.

"As far as Russia's Choice and the Party of Russian Unity and Accord are concerned, the Central Electoral Commission is now calculating how many mandates the two blocs have at regional level in general and how many of them belong to this or that particular region. All this delays the summing up of final results of the elections.".

KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA reportS that Aleksandr Yakovlev has been appointed the director of the Ostankino radio and television network, and publishes his brief biography.

MOSKOVSKAYA PRAVDA on electoral associations' tactical errors:

"Russia's Choice and electoral associations close to it made a lot of tactical blunders in their election campaign arrangements. However, the source of their telling defeat—considering the resources and the lead they had over all the other blocs and parties—is that the economic reform engenders lumpen individuals and lumpen mentality."

According to data as of mid-November (covering 1,557 voters in 14 main regions of Russia), made available to the newspaper, "about a quarter of the population view their living standards as destitution or something like that. A half of the people polled associate their hopes with social aid and another 30 per cent are in need of it...."

Sooner or later, the social environment, which was being uprooted and degraded by the objective course of events, was sure to find an idol and did find it in the form of the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia [LDPR] and in the person of its leader".

KRASNAYA ZVEZDA expresses doubts in the Vladimir Zhirinovskiy party's electoral "win":

"The results of polling in single-seat electoral districts by no means reflect a political reality that is taking shape. Clamour raised over the LDPR and its leader has long deadened both commonsense and the terrible echo of the recent Russian tragedy (October events)."

At the same time the newspaper condemns the stirring up of animosity in society when millions of people, who cast their votes for the LDPR, are indiscriminately accused of potential adherence to fascism: "This is both insulting and dangerous, because Russians voted virtually not so much for Zhirinovskiy as, anguished and hopeful, for their future, for a new, democratic, and in no way fascist Russia."

ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA carries an interview with Mikhail Mityukov, chairman of the legislation drafting commission to the president of the Russian Federation, who points out that the commission's task is to provide legal aid for the Federal Assembly so that "the parliament would not sideslip from the very outset, but could immediately plunge into lawmaking activity."

MOSKOVSKIY KOMSOMOLETS on preparations for the work of new Russian Parlimaent:

"Within three days of the publication of official election results by the press, the lucky winners in the electoral race to the State Duma should decide their future: Either they begin to engage in politics full time or stay at their previous jobs.

"Under the constitution which has been approved by the masses, deputies to the State Duma must work in parliament professionaly full time. They are allowed to earn on the sideline only as a result of teaching, scientific and other creative activities. The main source of financing the deputies' requriements should be at the parliament cash desk."

PRAVDA Says Gore Visit Went 'Largely Unnoticed'

PM2112133593 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 21 Dec 93 p 3

["Our Commentary" by Yuriy Glukhov: "At the Crossroads"]

[Text] U.S. Vice President Al Gore's visit to a number of republics of the former USSR somehow passed largely unnoticed and without special pomp and circumstance. However, it is not part of the rules of the American game to let "understudies" make policy, particularly when Bill Clinton will be following the same route in January.

Gore's trip was not smooth for both technical and political reasons. The U.S. visitor's plane was unable to land at Almaty as planned owing to bad weather, so the series of official contacts started not in Kazakhstan but in Kyrgyzstan. A delicate diplomatic problem arose in Moscow—how to avoid meeting with the ubiquitous leader of the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia. And the final leg was spoiled by the fact that he had to leave St. Petersburg a day early to get to Budapest on time to attend Hungarian Prime Minister Jozsef Antall's funeral.

In Bishkek the Americans noted that President Akayev's reformist policy was particularly impressive because "other former Soviet republics with a predominantly Muslim population have more authoritarian leaders." Incidentally, Kyrgyzstan gets the most per capita aid from the United States compared with other CIS members.

Kazahkstan ratified the international arms nonproliferation treaty during Gore's visit and signed an agreement with the United States on dismantling its nuclear arsenal, the third largest after Russia's and Ukraine's.

In Moscow a package of documents on cooperation in space exploration, the use of nuclear power, and in other areas was signed by Prime Minister Chernomyrdin and Vice President Gore, cochairmen of the Russian-U.S. Commission.

Why, then, did the visit by the eminent U.S. guest not achieve the propaganda impact of the past? The overall lack of focus of Gore's trip is due to the fact that the United States stands, as in Gorbachev's time, at a political crossroads. More than 80 percent of Russian voters have rejected the policy of Russia's Choice. Meanwhile THE WASHINGTON POST has described Russia's Choice as "the most radical pro-Western grouping, which has been so resolutely supported by the Clinton administration." The United States has now clearly started considering its own choice.

Kozyrev 'Dissatisified' with G-7 Cooperation

LD2112171993 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1613 GMT 21 Dec 93

[From the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature: reports by correspondents Dmitriy Voskoboynikov, Igor Porshnev, Vitaliy Trubetskoy, and others]

[Text] The Russian Foreign Minister has told Interfax that he is dissatisfied with the cooperation with the Group of Seven industrialized countries. He made the statement in Moscow Tuesday [21 December] following the meeting with the deputy Japanese Foreign Minister Kiichi Matsuura, who spoke of behalf of the Group of Seven (Japan chairs the Group of Seven until the end of the year—"IF").

The Russian Minister said that Russia continues with its policy of reforms given all the difficulties, but he was dissatisfied with the cooperation with the G-7 because many good ideas were not materializing.

Kozyrev has quoted the Japanese diplomat as saying that Russia violates financial discipline and hence delays with the aid. The Russian Minister showed bewilderment and said that the G-7 promised sustaining small and medium business in Russia.

Kozyrev said that the Japanese official admitted this. He also admitted bureaucratic delays by the World Bank. He said that G-7 leaders' promises should be realized.

Speaking with Matsuura, Kozyrev said that Russia is carrying out the reform, but not to suit the International Monetary Fund there are no other economic laws but to ensure financial stabilization, said the Russian Minister.

Kozyrev has said that "the International Monetary Fund and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development do not fully understand the difficulties associated with our reforms and are not quick enough in grasping the situation."

The Russian Minister said that the G-7 representative has agreed with the need to make cooperation regional. For example, financial aid from the foundation to sustain small and medium businesses should be channeled to two or three large and promising regions and thus show its efficiency. In other words, it is important that our businessmen feel that the aid mechanism works. This will be a graphic example for the entire country, said Kozyrev.

He believes that Russia so far does not have a mechanism for receiving aid.

The Minister admitted that he did not need to mention the fact when speaking with the G-7 representative. "But we should admit that we are unable to answer the question of who is responsible for implementation of the projects. In Murmansk (Kozyrev has been elected to the Russian Duma from the Murmansk constituency - "IF") they do not know who in the Center is responsible for sustaining small and medium business," he said.

"Reforms are not carried out this way," said the Minister. "The essence of the G-7 aid is to sustain small and medium business but businessmen in provinces do not know who is in charge of the aid distribution in the Center, who maintains contact with the foundation (for aid to small and medium businesses - "IF"), which was created by the World Bank. By the way, $1.5 Bn has been

put aside. But the Murmansk businessmen do not know about this. And we need to clear things up for them."

Asked whether the "Zhirinovskiy factor" will intensify the G-7 assistance to the Russian reforms, Kozyrev said that he did not think that Russia should use it to blackmail its partners, but the G-7 partners should understand the real state of things.

The foreign minister said that if Zhirinovskiy was of use this way, thank God. As the saying goes: Every cloud has a silver lining, and maybe the current situation in Russia will urge them to be active. But the G-7 aid goes slower than its political support, for example, in contacts at the summit level.

Asked whether the Russian proposal to convene in Moscow a G-7 meeting of foreign and finance ministers is still on the agenda, Kozyrev said "yes." But the meeting is postponed again, although there are no objections against it, he said.

The Minister has said that Russia has put forward the idea of a political dialogue. "Politically, we act as G-8, since there is no question in world politics that is solved without Russia. But the process has not been institutionalized."

Economically, it is so far difficult to say about integration into the G-7, he said. "We, unfortunately, are only integrating into world economics and we are so far not a superpower in terms of the full range of international and economic relations," said Kozyrev. The process may be long in this sphere. The road (of the economic cooperation between Russia and G-7 - "IF") has been laid correctly, although there are no mechanisms for its implementation, said the Russian Foreign Minister.

Foreign Ministry Spokesman Holds Briefing

Terms Unchanged for Latvian Pullout

LD2112142893 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1350 GMT 21 Dec 93

[By ITAR-TASS diplomatic correspondents Aleksandr Krylovich and Vladimir Tarakanov]

[Text] Moscow December 21 TASS—The position of the Russian leadership with regard to conditions for the withdrawal of Russian troops from Latvian territory remains unchanged, a Russian Foreign Ministry spokesman, Grigoriy Karasin told a briefing here today commenting on recent press reports citing Latvian officials as saying that the position of the Russian state delegation to talks with Latvia on this issue was allegedly at variance with the declared position of the Russian leadership.

This position was set forth by the Russian state delegation during talks with Latvia on November 15, 1993, the spokesman said. It was stated that "the Russian Federation was prepared to assume an obligation to complete the withdrawal of its troops before August 31, 1994 and give up its strategic installations in Ventspils and Liepae which it earlier planned to retain for the next five-to-six years on condition that Latvia agrees to the continued functioning of the early warning station in Skrunde for the next six years and takes an active part in providing housing and services to the Russian troops to be withdrawn.

The Russian spokesman expressed regret that Latvian officials have lately shown a propensity for "using dubious sources to make statements which have little to do with real politics and cannot facilitate the success of negotiations to using their influence in order to accelerate the finding of mutually acceptable solutions."

UN Human Rights Commissioner Welcomed

LD2112190793 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1613 GMT 21 Dec 93

[From the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature: Reports by Diplomatic Correspondents Dmitriy Voskoboinikov, Igor Porshnev, Vitaliy Trubetskoy and others]

[Text] Russia welcomes the UN General Assembly decision adopted by consensus Monday [20 December] to set up the position of a UN high commissioner on human rights. Grigoriy Karasin, head of the information department of the Russian Foreign Ministry, read Minister Andrey Kozyrev's statement to this effect at a briefing in Moscow Monday [as received].

The minister said that "the first priority was to start the implementation of the resolution so that this institution starts work. It should concentrate on most urgent human rights problems, notably in Latvia and Estonia and the release of Soviet POWs in Afghanistan."

The minister pledged Russia's constructive cooperation with the high commissioner. "We would also welcome close cooperation between the CIS Human Rights Commission, that was set up on Russia's initiative, and the high commissioner," his statement said.

He called on the world community to respond faster to new challenges. "In particular the Russian proposal that the UN convene a conference on refugees and displaced persons will not be considered before the next session of the General Assembly. In developing its cooperation with the UN, Russia will press for a quicker reaction of the world community to the needs of those in trouble," the minister noted.

Karasin also explained why Russia did not support the UN General Assembly resolution on the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina that had been adopted Monday in a 109 to 57 vote. Neither had other permanent members of the UN Security Council, except the U.S.

The Russian Foreign Ministry spokesman explained that whatever the UN did should promote a peaceful settlement in Bosnia-Herzegovina but "this resolution runs counter to this goal."

Karasin said that when the resolution was submitted, Russia suggested to its coauthors—the Bosnian delegation and a contact group of the Islamic Conference Organization—that they reword it "so as to remedy the unbalanced nature of the document which was biased against one party in the conflict."

In particular, Russia wanted to delete the call on the Security Council to lift the embargo on weapons supply to Bosnia which "could only result in scaling up the hostilities and thwart the negotiating process. These considerations also dictated our proposal that the appeal to all countries to cooperate with Bosnia-Herzegovina in implementing its right 'to individual and collective self-defense' should be left out of the resolution. Nor do we support the provision that denies Yugoslavia its UN membership."

The Russian official said that "if the resolution items on lifting the embargo and expulsion of Yugoslavia from the General Assembly had been voted on separately, the Russian delegation would vote against them."

Karasin said that the UN resolution on human rights violations in the former Yugoslavia that had been proposed by the U.S. and numerous other countries and adopted Monday was also biased against Serbia.

"While we do not deny that the Serbians are among those who violate human rights we think that all warring parties are guilty of crude and large scale human rights violations in the former Yugoslavia. All those guilty of violating international humanitarian law must be brought to trial. The coauthors of the resolution did not think it possible, however, to incorporate the Russian proposals in their draft," Karasin said.

In his words, the Russian delegation did not break the consensus "but the Russian ambassador said that if this document were submitted for voting in the form it was adopted the Russian delegation would not back it."

Milosevic Victory in Serbian Elections Viewed

PM2112150393 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 21 Dec 93 First Edition p 3

[Report by Andrey Baturin and Sergey Gryzunov of RIA-Novosti, especially for IZVESTIYA: "Surprise Gift from Russia Helped Milosevic to Election Victory"]

[Excerpts] Belgrade—Slobodan Milosevic's Socialist Party gained a majority in the extraordinary elections to the Serbian Parliament, although not enough to form a government.

On the eve of the ballot, Russia presented Slobodan Milosevic with a surprise gift, announcing that it will construct a gas pipeline in Serbia. The advantageous deal, signed in Belgrade by "Gazprom" representatives, has political significance for Serbia's current leadership. On the eve of the elections, Russian gas sector workers were received by President Milosevic at his residence. The meeting was accompanied by deafening publicity in the government-controlled mass media. The aim was to gain additional points in the election campaign. At his meeting with the Russians, Milosevic declared: "This deal is the beginning of the end of the embargo."

Russia was and remains the sole influential country which, aware of the Serbian people's difficult situation amid sanctions, is trying to get them humanitarian aid, forcing this decision through in the United Nations. For its part, official Belgrade has never concealed its disagreement with the policy of reforms and democratization in Russia. So, was it worth presenting such a gift to those who are today welcoming the success of the reds and the browns in Russia's elections, who enthusiastically hailed the edicts by the State Committee for the State of Emergency, and who gave a hearty welcome to Khasbulatov's envoys?

"Given that there are twice as many portraits of Milosevic as holy icons in every peasant's home, what other result could have been expected at the elections?"—This was the response by a senior priest's in Belgrade's suburbs to our request for a comment on the results of the elections to the Serbian Parliament. [passage omitted]

The results of the ballot in Russia had a significant impact on the outcome of the elections. Serb nationalist leader Seselj was first to send congratulations to Zhirinovskiy. Gratification with the outcome of the ballot in Russia was also displayed on the pages of publications loyal to the Belgrade regime and from the state television screen. BORBA, a newspaper sympathetic to Serbia's democratic opposition, noted in its commentary: "If you watched yesterday's news bulletin, you will have witnessed a eulogy of the victory of Russia's ultranationalists. Was this not a blatant example of what is wanted here in Serbia?"

It is probable that official Belgrade continues to nurture illusions that Russia will once again bring out "Krushchev's shoe" and use it to help to defend the interests of Serb nationalists. And perhaps Zhirinovskiy will even send his troops to the Balkans.

Political & Media Issues Issues

Yeltsin Signs Edict Abolishing Security Ministry

LD2112180293 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1704 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Moscow, 21 Dec (ITAR-TASS)—Russian President Boris Yeltsin today issued a decree abolishing the Security Ministry and setting up the Federal Counterintelligence Service of the Russian Federation. The text of the decree issued by the President's press-service says:

"The system of bodies of the VChK-OGPU-NKVD-MGB-KGB-MB [All- Russian Emergency Commission to combat counterrevolution and sabotage—United State Political Directorate under the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR—People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs—Ministry of State Security—State Security Committee—Ministry of Security] has proved unreformable. The attempts at reorganization that have been made in recent years were basically superficial and cosmetic. Up to the present moment the Russian Security Ministry lacks a strategic concept of ensuring Russia's security. Counterintelligence work has deteriorated. The system of political investigation has been mothballed and could easily be recreated.

Against the background of the democratic and constitutional transformations taking place in Russia, the existing system of ensuring Russia's security has outlived itself; it is ineffective, burdensome for the state budget, and a restraining factor in the implementation of political and economic reforms.

With the purpose of creating a reliable system of state security of the Russian Federation, I decree:

1. To abolish the Russian Security Ministry;

2. To set up the Federal Counterintelligence Service of the Russian Federation;

3. To establish that the Russian Federal Counterintelligence Service should be headed by a director having the rank of Russian Federation minister and that he should be subordinated directly to the Russian president.

4. To appoint N.M. Golushko director of the Russian Federal Counterintelligence Service.

5. N.M. Golushko, director of the Federal Counterintelligence Service, should within two weeks draw up a provision on the Federal Counterintelligence Service and submit it for approval to the Russian president.

6. To rule that staff of the Russian Federation Security Ministry and bodies subordinated to it are considered as serving temporarily at the Federal Counterintelligence Service until they have passed the attestation required for them to be taken on the staff of the Russian Federal Counterintelligence Service.

7. The decree comes into force as of the moment of its signing."

Golushko Appointed New Head

LD2112180493 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1708 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Moscow December 21 ITAR-TASS—President Boris Yeltsin on Tuesday signed a decree abolishing Russia's Ministry of Security, the successor to the former KGB and replacing it with a Federal Counter-Intelligence Service.

Yeltsin named Security Minister Nikolay Golushko as head of the new service and gave him two weeks to work out regulations for the service and submit them to the president for signature.

Golushko was born in Kazakhstan in 1937, graduated from the law department of the Tomsk University in 1959, worked as a police investigator until 1963, when he joined the KGB in Kemerovo, Siberia. From 1974 to 1987, he worked in Moscow's KGB headquarters and from 1987 to 1991 in Ukraine. He was back in Moscow as deputy chief of the new Security Ministry and then replaced its boss Victor Barannikov, who was sacked by Yeltsin "on moral grounds" and joined the rebels in the dissolved parliament.

Stepashin Named Deputy

LD2112182393 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1733 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Moscow, 21 Dec (ITAR-TASS)—Russian Federation President Boris Yeltsin today appointed Sergey Stepashin as first deputy director of the Russian Federation Federal Counterintelligence Service, the press service of the president has informed ITAR-TASS.

Sergey Stepashin was born in 1952. He is a graduate of the High School of Political Studies of the USSR Internal Affairs Ministry and the Military Academy, and a candidate of Historical Science. In 1991 he was appointed deputy director of the RSFSR Federal Security Agency and from 1992 he was the Russian Federation deputy security minister.

Presidential Spokesman Comments

LD2212074893 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 0600 GMT 22 Dec 93

[Text] The abolition of the Security Ministry is a logical consequence of the political changes that have taken place in Russia. It directly stems from the new Constitution, which caters for citizens' rights and freedoms. This is what presidential press secretary Vyacheslav Kostikov had to say about Boris Yeltsin's decree on the abolition of the Security Ministry. A Federal counterintelligence service was set up instead of it. Kostikov stressed that the abolition of the Security Ministry, the successor of the former KGB, accentuates and confirms the option for democratic strategy chosen by the Russian president.

FIC Head Poltoranin To Step Down

LD2112155493 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1400 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Mikhail Poltoranin, head of the Federal Information Center [FIC] said in an interview to a RIA correspondent that he has decided to leave his job in the FIC because he has been elected deputy to the State Duma. His First Deputy Sergey Yushenkov, also elected to the Duma on the ticket of Russia's Choice, has made the same decision.

A RIA correspondent has also learned that new appointments to the president's apparatus and the Russian Government were discussed in the Kremlin on Monday, but no further details have been given.

It has not been excluded that new structures to deal with media will be set up very soon by the president's decree.

Resignation Not 'Unexpected'

LD2112171493 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1400 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] According to reports from RIA-Novosti, Mikhail Poltoranin, the head of the Federal Information Center [FIC], has decided to step down from his work in the FIC. We telephoned this organization and Poltoranin's office told us that he was currently in the Kremlin. Press secretary Yelena Fabrichnova said that the statement about the head of the Federal Information Center's resignation had been on President Yeltsin's table since 1 July this year, and thus this step by Mikhail Poltoranin should not be viewed as unexpected. However, Yelena Fabrichnova also noted that the refusal of the country's leadership to set up a Federal Information Corporation had played some part in the appearance of today's announcement by Mikhail Poltoranin.

You will recall that the idea of setting up the corporation arose precisely in the FIC. The Federal Information Corporation was to have united the most influential mass media—agencies, newspapers, television and radio companies—on a voluntary basis. Yelena Fabrichnova, the press secretary of the head of the Federal Information Center, said that Mikhail Poltoranin had evidently also taken into account the fact that he had to work in the parliament. He has been elected from the party lists.

Filatov To Stay in President's Administration

LD2212162193 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1448 GMT 22 Dec 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondents Yuriy Sizov and Gennadiy Talalayev]

[Text] Moscow, 22 Dec—Sergey Filatov, head of the Russian president's administration, does not intend to be a deputy of the State Duma. He announced this today, talking to journalists in the Kremlin after Boris Yeltsin's news conference.

Sergey Filatov explained that he had stood as a deputy in order to support the list of the "Russia's Choice" bloc in the election campaign. He said the constitution adopted in the referendum "sets many serious new tasks" before the administration, including those to do with structural changes. In this connection he considers that he needs to remain in the presidential administration.

Aleksandr Yakovlev Tipped as New Ostankino Chief

LD2112170393 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1555 GMT 21 Dec 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Khamara Zamyatina]

[Text] Moscow, 21 Dec—Academician Aleksandr Yakovlev will occupy the post of chairman of the Ostankino State TV and Radio Company, the ITAR-TASS correspondent has learned from a reliable source in the Kremlin.

Yeltsin Preparing Edict on TV Reorganization

LD2212112093 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1520 GMT 21 Dec 93

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] Central television will be reorganized in the near future, Oleg Yusitskiy, the Russian deputy minister for the press, believes. In accordance with an edict of the Russian President Boris Yeltsin which is being drawn up, only one channel will be under the state's jurisdiction; the other three will be transferred to independent structures. We hope that our television company will also be able to take its place in independent broadcasting.

Shumeyko Confirms Three New Media Bodies

LD2212094893 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0922 GMT 22 Dec 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Oleg Velichko]

[Text] Moscow December 22 TASS—Russian First Deputy Prime Minister Vladimir Shumeyko confirmed on Wednesday that the Russian president has received proposals to create three new bodies to supervise mass media in the country.

He told a press conference that draft decrees submitted to Boris Yeltsin envisage the creation of a mass media department, a federal radio and tv service and a press committee. The latter is to replace the Information Ministry and the Federal Information Centre.

Shumeyko is currently the Information Minister. Mikhail Poltoranin, a close aide of the president, said on Tuesday he quit as the head of the Federal Information Center and would work in the State Duma.

Aleksandr Yakovlev, the father of glasnost in perestroyka years of Mikhail Gorbachev, was proposed to

head the tv and radio service, while Boris Mironov, director of the "Russia" publishers, was nominated to head the press committee, according to Shumeyko.

Speaking on the future of two major news agencies—ITAR-TASS and RIA—Shumeyko said that one of the draft decrees makes them "state-run and absolutely independent", two notions which are practically impossible to combine.

Shumeyko added that the draft decrees had been agreed upon with "all the interested parties" and expressed hope they would be signed by the president.

Fedorov Dismisses Resignation Rumors

LD2112180793 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1620 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Moscow, 21 Dec—(ITAR-TASS)—Boris Fedorov, deputy chairman of the Russian Council of Ministers, has stated that rumors that are being circulated about his resignation are groundless.

In his statement received by ITAR-TASS today, Boris Fedorov also stressed that should the government change its economic and political course, he will reserve the right to resign from the government. However, he was confident that "President Boris Yeltsin supports the course that the government has been following for the past two years and will continue to follow it in the future."

Reshuffles Among Top Brass Predicted; Candidates Tipped

MK2112125093 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 21 Dec 93 p 3

[Yevgeniy Fedorov report: "Armed Forces Reform. Army Will Be Called to Account for its Choice"]

[Text] Defense Minister Pavel Grachev has canceled his visit to Romania, scheduled for 20 December, citing his preoccupation with preparations for the upcoming meeting of the CIS countries' defense ministers in Ashgabat. It cannot be ruled out, however, that this step is also related to the post-election reshuffles at the top echelons of the executive branch. According to KOMMERSANT-DAILY's information, the Yeltsin administration has come up with a negative assessment of the Defense Ministry chiefs' role in the run-up to the elections.

Election results in some military electoral wards suggest that the opposition found support among servicemen. This was prompted not so much by the servicemen's commitment to communist or liberal democratic ideas, but rather by the government's short-sighted policy. The issue is not only that officers lack social safety nets, but also that the troops' combat readiness has been on the ebb, the Army is fragmented following the USSR's breakup, and the servicemen were called upon to assault the White House. At the same time, according to reports received by KOMMERSANT-DAILY, some people in the president's entourage blame the generals for their commitment to a thesis whereby "the Army must be outside politics"—an allegedly reactionary principle that has given rise to an ideological vacuum in the Army.

If Boris Yeltsin lends an ear to these ideas that have emerged in his entourage, a number of high-ranking commanders are bound to resign soon. According to reports from highly confidential sources, the list of the highest-ranking military commanders to be discharged includes around three dozen names—primarily those who had doubts about the need to dissolve the parliament. Among those mentioned are deputy defense ministers and chiefs of General Staff administrations.

According to those same sources, Yeltsin will apparently also be advised to restructure command and control agencies in the Armed Forces. To all appearances, it will be proposed that the defense minister's influence on the Armed Forces be reduced by taking the General Staff from his direct control. The minister will retain political, personnel, and other functions that are not directly related to the command and control of troops. The General Staff, in turn, will exercise operational command and control and be responsible for the maintenance of combat readiness. At the same time, the minister will lose his right to give orders to the Armed Forces. All orders to the troops will be given by the president and officially issued by the General Staff.

Moreover, in order to increase control over the Defense Ministry and other power structures, the post of a deputy prime minister supervising these agencies' activity may be created in the government. This government member may have fairly broad powers.

Possible candidates for this post include Deputy Defense Minister Konstantin Kobets, who has repeatedly demonstrated his personal loyalty to the president in critical moments. This man's "army" background, however, may incur displeasure from the Security Ministry and the Internal Affairs Ministry. Proceeding from the principle of neutrality, a civilian candidate may be most acceptable for all the three ministers. For instance, current First Deputy Defense Minister Andrey Kokoshin, who enjoys authority in government circles.

In addition, it cannot be ruled out that Security Council Secretary Oleg Lobov may also be given the rank of deputy prime minister. Furthermore, there is Marshal Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov, who remains at Yeltsin's personal disposal. The former commander in chief of the CIS Joint Armed Forces, however, may draw a negative reaction not only from the Security Ministry and the Internal Affairs Ministry, but also from Pavel Grachev himself, who has complex relations with the marshal. Other candidacies mulled over in government circles include Viktor Glukhikh, chairman of the Defense Industry Committee, and Mikhail Maley, chairman of the Interdepartmental Commission for scientific and technical matters concerning the defense industry.

[Article includes the following boxed passage]

Proposed general scheme of the command and control of the Armed Forces

President—commander in chief appoints the defense minister, gives orders to the Armed Forces through the General Staff, appoints General Staff chief and members.

Defense Minister issues directives on personnel, military-technical, military-economic, and budget matters to the Armed Forces.

General Staff officially issues the commander in chief's orders, exercises operational command and control of the Armed Forces.

Yeltsin: Reforms May Acquire More 'Social Orientation'

LD2112181193 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1615 GMT 21 Dec 93

[ITAR-TASS correspondent Tamara Zamyatina]

[Text] Moscow, 21 Dec—During a meeting today with several members of the Presidential Council, Boris Yeltsin expressed his intention to cooperate constructively with the Federal Assembly, participants in the conversation informed the ITAR-TASS correspondent. In their view, the president intimated that, taking account of the election results, the reforms may possibly take on a more social orientation.

The president informed those assembled of his decision to appoint academician Aleksandr Yakovlev chairman of the Ostankino State Television and Radio Company. At the same time, with the forthcoming possible creation of a federal committee for television and radio broadcasting, he will likely be offered the post of head of this new structure.

The members of the Presidential Council differed in their opinions on the tactics of cooperating with the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia [LDPR]. Some of them think that "barricades should not be raised against the Liberal Democratic Party of Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, but if the LDPR operates on the edge of political extremisism the force of law should to be used against it."

It was also proposed that the Cabinet of Ministers and the president's administration needed to be reformed. Moreover, professionalism, not party membership, of the candidates for various posts was named as criteria for cadre reshuffling.

Chernomyrdin Promises Funds for Science Research

LD2112201693 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1700 GMT 21 Dec 93

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] Today Chairman of the Council of Ministers Viktor Chernomyrdin met Yuriy Osipov, president of the Russian Academy of Sciences, and promised him that in the near future the academy would be paid its arrears for the fourth quarter amounting to 24,000 million rubles.

G. Fadeyeva, in a report from the academy, says that some of the academy's institutions are on the verge of closure or already closed. The radiotelescope Proton-600 has stopped working. The work of seismological stations is being curtailed. The Protein Institute in Pushchino may no longer exist by the new year. This was reported at today's conference of the Presidium of the Academy and rectors of the academic institutes. Their funds are barely enough for the scientists' pay and essential services, but not for fundamental research.

At this morning's meeting between Osipov and Chernomyrdin, the head of government promised to pay the scientists' arrears by the new year, the reporter says.

Yuriy Osipov says in an interview that it is no longer possible to live on the funds allocated earlier.

The reporter adds that this is not the worst of it because in the draft state budget for 1994 the words "science" and "academy" are simply left out and there is just the mention of support for scientific-technical progress.

New Party To Represent 'Middle Class' Formed

LD2112185993 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1627 GMT 21 Dec 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent]

[Text] Moscow December 21 TASS—A Party of the Majority (December 12) was formed here today to represent the interests of the "middle class", and small and medium businesses.

The party was founded by a group of people engaged in Moscow small and medium businesses who were joined by entrepreneurs from the southern Urals, St. Petersburg, Kaliningrad and some other regions.

In their opinion, Borovoy's Party of Economic Freedom, Zatulin's Association of Businessmen for New Russia and others represent only "large and monopolized businesses".

The 75-member list of the party's organizational committee does not include a single well-known Russian politician or public figure. However, speakers of today's news conference—Vladimir Sokolov Ph.D., businessman Vladimir Grechnev and political scientist Vladimir Chumikov—believe they will come to power sooner or later and will be elected parliament members at the next elections.

'Sporting Russia' Party Elects Leader

OW2212082193 Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel and Orbita Networks in Russian 1945 GMT 15 Dec 93

[By A. Sturua from Moscow; from the "Utro" program]

[Text] The first congress of the Sporting Russia [sportivnaya rossiya] party was held in the Hall of Columns of the Moscow House of Union. Delegates from practically all regions of the country took part in it. Most of them are world record breakers, champions, and winners of Olympic games. The Soviet Union took pride in its sportsmen, applauded them, and used them for propaganda for many years. Yet they were viewed almost like inferiors outside the sphere of sports. In today's turbulent times, they decided to proclaim themselves a serious political force which supports statehood, order, and the renewal of age-old spiritual and moral traditions which is the basis for raising the younger generation.

[Begin recording] [Karelin] It is criminal for the multimillion legion of sportsmen in our country to remain idle. We are capable to bring some degree of satisfaction to our troubled times and aid both the physical rehabilitation and moral and spiritual revival of our nation, and not only of the Slav people, but also of all those who inhabit our country. Power is not the question. The power should go to the state. Our main goal is building the state, and power is a secondary issue. If there is a state there will also be power. This is our concept: We must help build the currently unsteady state, we must fully assist the good intentions to revive Russia as a mighty state which had, and should have, an influence on all of Europe, and this influence should be a benevolent one. Therefore, all of us strong, powerful, and noble people are gathered here.

[Kvantrishvili] Our goal is to prevent the destruction of the genetic pool and the traditions of our country, to prevent the disappearance of such concepts as honor and conscience, to save our nation's health, and prevent ethnic wars from utterly incinerating our state. [end recording]

The congress was attended by observing delegations made up of sportsmen from practically all of the former Soviet republics, which went on to become independent states. The congress adopted the party's charter and program and elected its leading organs. Aleksandr Karelin, Siberian Hercules, five times world champion, and winner of two Olympics became the leader of the party.

Economic Issues

Yeltsin Signs Decree on Budget Deficit

LD2112204393 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1934 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Moscow December 21 TASS—Russian President Boris Yeltsin signed a decree on Tuesday [21 December] specifying the federal budget for the fourth quarter of the year.

With a view of reducing the federal budget deficit in 1993 to not more than 10 per cent of the gross national product, federal budget expenditures in the fourth quarter of 1993 will be established at 22,246.8 billion roubles, the decree said.

The decree sets the ceiling of federal budget deficit for the fourth quarter of 1993 at 5.510 billion roubles, provided part of it will be paid off with 1,500.1 billion roubles to be allocated from foreign credits granted to the Russian Federation.

The government has been instructed to execute the corrections to the federal budget for the fourth quarter of 1993. The decree will be submitted to the Federal Assembly and shall come into force from the day of publication, the presidential press service said.

Government Adopts Socioeconomic Program for Kurils

LD2112221793 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2053 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] The Russian government has adopted a Federal Program of Socioeconomic Development for the Kurils Isles, Sakhalin Region, until the year 2000.

An ordinance signed by Viktor Chernomyrdin on December 17 makes the Sakhalin Region administration and the State Committee on Socioeconomic Development of the North the customers in implementing the program.

The Finance Ministry will provide funds for the program in draft national budgets and budgets of the Federal Road Foundation.

The Sakhalin Region administration is told to allocate land and water areas for prospecting and construction to businesses involved in the program.

The Transport, Economy and Finance Ministries will provide subsidies and subventions for construction of 62 km of roads in the isle of Kunashir, 87 km in Kunashir and 12 km in Shikotan when they draft the Federal Road Foundations 1994 and 1995 budgets.

An INTERFAX correspondent reports that the program emphasizes fishing and fish processing, setting up state-of-the-art biotechnological processes and use of non-conventional sources of energy, such as geothermal power stations.

When the program is implemented, the fishing harvest will increase from the current 70,000-80,000 tons to 200,000 tons a year worth $141 Mn [million] in 1994 and $929.1 Mn in 1998. Sakhalin economist expect this amount to exceed $1 Bn [billion] in 2000.

The capital investments in the period from 1993 to 2000 are expected to amount to nearly 230 Bn rubles in the prices of the first quarter of 1993. These finances will be invested in the infrastructure of fishing ports, airports

Mendeleevo in Kunashir and Burevestnik in Iturup, social services and agroindustrial assets.

FITUR Head Rebukes Union Chiefs for Yeltsin Letter

MK2112132093 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 21 Dec 93 p 3

[Andrey Nikolayev report under the "Conflict" rubric: "Six Trade Union Leaders Ask President To Help Resolve the Matter of Federation of Independent Trade Unions Property"]

[Text] Viktor Listikov, secretary of the Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia [FITUR]'s council, said that six FITUR leaders' message to the Russian president was "rather harsh and defiant." "In particular, the trade union leaders claim," Viktor Listikov recalled, "that the state authorities' lack of understanding of 'the importance of the actual shaping of labor relations in Russia' predetermined the passivity of the bulk of workers' masses at the elections." However, Mr. Listikov said, this is already the second year that general agreements have been signed with trade unions, including those that are not part of the FITUR. "At least for this reason it would be incorrect to talk about the authorities' lack of understanding of the importance of shaping labor relations," Mr. Listikov said. According to Mr. Listikov, appropriate efforts have been taken in that regard. This was confirmed by a recent meeting of all-Russian trade unions and their associations, which elected by secret ballot a delegation to sit on the Russian tripartite commission on regulating social and labor relations.

It is well known that the meeting was also attended by trade union leaders who subsequently sent a message to the president. In Mr. Listikov's view, having failed to win a nomination to the tripartite commission, they are now trying to convince the president of the need to restructure the tripartite commission "on the basis of equal representation from the free trade unions' bloc and a bloc of trade union genetically and organizationally connected with the FITUR." They are thus trying to change the already elected representatives to the commission and to provoke state chiefs, including the president, into interfering in internal trade union affairs.

In this situation, in Mr. Listikov's words, it is surprising that the authors of the message draw "a conclusion about the need for reviewing urgently the authorities' approach to labor relations reform," and propose among urgent measures that the trade unions be given a separate building equipped with special communications means inside the Garden Ring [downtown Moscow] to house their staffs. As a next step, the leaders propose that "an edict be issued on suspending operations with trade union property and setting up an appropriate commission made up of government and trade union representatives in order to find out who owns the property." "Apparently, some people simply want to get hold of the property, which has been created by others for years, by exploiting the parliamentary election results under the guise of labor relations reform," Mr. Listikov said.

Continuing State Role in Core Enterprises Urged

PM2112145993 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 21 Dec 93 First Edition p 2

[Igor Karpenko report: "State Enterprises' Fate—Some To Remain 'Official,' Others To Be Floated"]

[Text] A scientific and practical seminar entitled "Strategy and Tactics for Reforming the System of Running State Enterprises" was held in Moscow 15 through 18 December.

This seminar, held at the Finance Academy, was distinguished from the now-fashionable stream of conferences and seminars by two points. First, by the very fact that a discussion on the future of state enterprises—something which, caught up in privatization, everyone seemed to have forgotten—was taking place. And, second, by the fact that the people who would have to live and work according to normative documents were involved in the discussion of these documents before their official ratification.

Even under the most favorable privatization conditions, the change of ownership will take many years, and the state sector will continue to dominate the economy. But so far the system of running state enterprises has not been formally stripped of direct departmental diktat or in any way adapted to the market—enterprises have been left to the whim of fate and, at the same time, deprived of their independence. Hence the decline in output volumes and efficiency.

The strategic path which the seminar participants discussed was to turn a small number of state enterprises into "official" [kazennyy] enterprises whose output relates to ensuring the country's defense capability and to providing monopoly servicing for orders needed by the state alone. The state itself will also strictly monitor their activity—output volume, sales, and the distribution of profits and pay—appoint leaders on a contract basis, and so forth. All remaining state enterprises will be either privatized or commercialized. In the latter instance, enterprises will be transformed into open joint-stock companies where the state will own a large enough block of shares (or a "golden" share) to allow it to control the management of production. This form of ownership will allow them to act as equal partners in market relations. The anachronistic concept of "full economic control" [polnoye khozyaystvennoye vedeniye] will disappear from their status.

The seminar participants were also familiarized with the government's overall action plan to get state enterprises out of crisis and to restructure and financially regenerate them, and with specific drafts of laws, presidential edicts, and government decrees to implement this program. Incidentally, the elite of the corps of directors, who were represented at the seminar, found food for thought in the content of these documents—they more than

anyone can imagine what the consequences will be. Very typical in this respect was an episode during a discussion about the edict already signed by the president "On the Creation of Financial and Industrial Groups"—an argument about the expediency of banning "crossholdings" in shares by the participants in these groups. Some were simply confused about why crossholdings should be banned, when in practice it would be a case of capital being merged. Others claimed that the restriction is needed since it actually changes—reduces—the amount of incorporation capital, and this could sharply increase the risk attached to commercial deals with a specific group member. Finally, others tried to show that crossholdings are not only beneficial but necessary.

The documents issued to the seminar participants also included the draft of a long-awaited new state privatization program formulated along the lines of a presidential edict. In my view, this decision is simply wise—after all, otherwise we might drag out its ratification in the Federal Assembly (as was the case throughout the past year). Of course, it is not appropriate to advance the reforms merely through presidential edicts, but it would hardly be better to stop them outright. It is more sensible to at least temporarily use edicts and government decrees to implement the normative acts without which neither state nor private enterprises are now able to operate.

Price Movements in Second Week of December Viewed

PM2212095593 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 22 Dec 93 First Edition p 4

[Report by Irina Goryacheva of the Center for the Economic Situation under the Russian Government: "Prices of Services Rising More Quickly Than Food Prices"]

[Text] The general inflation index for 7-14 December (according to current data) was 102.3 percent; for the period since the beginning of the month it is 105.3 percent and since the beginning of the year it is 8.5 times. Prices of and tariffs for consumer services continued to rise more quickly than prices of food and nonfood commodities. The average cost of the selection of 19 most important foodstuffs was 29,300 rubles [R] per month, which is 1.9 percent higher than a week ago.

In the second week of December inflation was 2.3 percent, which is somewhat less than in the first week of the month and practically on a par with the lowest weekly figure for the current year (2.2 at the end of November). Food prices increased least—two percent. Prices of nonfood commodities increased by 2.5 percent. Consumer services prices rose most during the week—four percent.

The variation in inflation in the separate economic regions of Russia last week was 3.5 percent. The inflation rate was highest in West and East Siberia—4.8 and 4.1 percent, respectively. In Moscow and St. Petersburg inflation was again lower than the Russian average—1.7 and 1.4 percent, respectively.

Last week the prices of eggs, fish products, and vegetable oil—six, 4.3, and four percent, respectively— rose more rapidly than the prices of other food commodities. Butter, grits, and pasta were 3.2-3.4 percent dearer than the previous week. But meat products, sugar, and vodka prices again rose by less than one percent. In Russia as a whole, since the beginning of the year, food prices have increased seven times over. Bakery products—8.4 times; meat products and eggs—8.1 times; and dairy and fish products—7.3 times—have seen the biggest increases.

The average cost of the selection of 19 most important foodstuffs was R29,300 per month as of 14 December, having increased by 1.9 percent compared with the previous week and 6.7 times compared with last December. The cost of the selection at organized trade prices was R28,200 (an increase of 1.8 percent over the week), and at nonorganized trade prices—R38,200 (1.9 percent). The selection was 1.4 times dearer in the nonorganized trade than in the organized trade, as it was the previous week.

The difference between the maximum and minimum cost of the selection in various Russian cities increased and was 3.8 times last week. The maximum intraregional difference is still to be found in the Volga region—2.7 times. As far as Russian cities go, the biggest increases in the cost of the selection were in Ishimbay and Abakan—16 and 15 percent, respectively.

The cost of the selection of 19 most important foodstuffs in Moscow rose over the week by 1.9 percent and was R33,800 as of 14 December. There was a rather large increase in the cost of the selection in St. Petersburg over the week—4.4 percent; the cost being R28,400. Moscow is 33d in the list of cities surveyed and St. Petersburg is 63d.

Conference Discusses Tax System Options

PM2112152993 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 21 Dec 93 First Edition pp 1, 3

[Report by Valeriy Zenkov: "Taxes. Whereas Billions Are Concealed in Britain, In Our Country It's Trillions"]

[Text] A conference entitled "Tax Policy in Russia: The Situation and the Prospects" was held in Moscow on Saturday [18 December]. Its organizers included, in particular, the Socioeconomic Policy Analysis Center of the Russian Federation President's Administration.

The holding of the conference coincideed with the Russian Council of Ministers Presidium's examination shortly beforehand of the draft presidential edict on certain changes in corporate taxation. And although the conference participants did not set themselves the goal of assessing the draft edict, it was discussed nonetheless. This is because the draft, which was formulated deep within the bowels of the Finance Ministry, promises nothing good for taxpayers. A tougher tax regime in all

areas is proposed: an increase in tax rates, a change in the procedure for levying existing taxes, the introduction of new taxes and levies, and an increase in indirect taxes.

"The tax system adopted two years ago shows that it is proving its worth," Anatoliy Ryzhkov, chief of the State Taxation Service Consolidate Tax Reform Department, told the conference. "It ensures a steady increase in tax revenue into the budget in conditions of high inflation. Whereas, for example, 4.7 trillion rubles [R] in taxes were collected in our country last year, the figure for the first 11 months of this year will be 32 trillion."

This increase is not the result of improved and more efficient work by tax inspectorates. The reason lies in the growth of prices. As A. Ryzhkov noted, this is where the value of the existing tax system lies. It is no coincidence that most of the former union republics have introduced tax systems virtually duplicating the Russian system.

But this in no way means, it was noted at the conference, that the tax system must remain unchanged. The tax payment system is still imperfect. Five taxes (profits tax, value-added tax, individual income tax, resource payments, and excise duties) provide 95 percent of all tax revenues. The other 15 federal taxes yield about 5 percent of revenue. Whereas the 20 local taxes account for less than 1 percent. Essentially many components of the tax system have had no impact.

Another defect in the current tax system is the substantial predominance of the fiscal function of taxes over their incentive function. In practice taxes do not promote increased investment or goods production. Yet the tax mechanism possesses considerable potential for influencing the dynamics and structure of production and the development of scientific and technical progress. In the West, for example, since the late 1980's tax systems have become an increasingly organic part of a unified system for the monetary and financial regulation of reproduction processes.

In was noted at the conference that tax mechanisms fall into the category of long-term economic levers. They do not have an immediate effect. Therefore stability is the main achievement of any tax system. But if changes are ripe, they must be made.

Particular attention was sparked by a speech by Dmitriy Lvov, deputy director of the Russian Academy of Sciences Central Econometrics Institute. In his view, natural resources must become the basis of the tax system. D. Lvov proposed that rent, which must be synchronized with pricing policy, should be the basis of taxes. For example, energy price deregulation should be accompanied by the simultaneous introduction of rent taxes and the gradual exemption from taxes of processing industry. This kind of a tax system offers the possibility of abandoning licenses and quotas. In such a situation rent would be exacted at the point of sale of oil or gas, for example. But this in no way means that the gasoline price should rise as a result. This being the case, our industry would have a real opportunity to develop. Whereas now taxes are collected even from enterprises which are on their last legs, and naturally there can be no question of them developing in these conditions.

D. Lvov talked about this proposal at a government session a year and a half ago now, but it was not taken up. Meanwhile, however, many foreign academics are proposing that the tax system in our country should be built on precisely this principle. Indeed a prophet hath no honor in his own country!

An attempt was made at the conference to clarify the extent of tax concealment in our country. Even A. Ryzhkov, chief of the State Tax Inspectorate Consolidated Tax Reform Department, could not give a figure for this. Conference attendee Fred Harrison, director of the London center for tax incentives, said that in Britain the amount of capital in the shadow economy is estimated at 36-48 billion pounds sterling a year. That is approximately R60 trillion. Let us not forget that Britain has had a strict and tough tax system not for two years, like us, for for centuries. So it is not hard to imagine the extent of tax concealment in our country. Especially as it is known that one in every four checked enterprises, particularly private enterprises, attempt to conceal their income.

Regional Affairs

Dudayev Appeals to Moldova To Help Iraq

MK2112135093 Moscow MOSKOVSKIY KOMSOMOLETS in Russian 19 Dec 93 p 2

[Oleg Fochkin report: "Dudayev Shows Concern for Iraq"]

[Text] Dzhokhar Dudayev, who has not as yet recovered from an opposition attack, on the same day appealed to Moldova President Mircea Snegur to assist in getting the blockade lifted from Iraq. According to INTERFAX, sources close to the apparatus of the head of the Moldovan state report that in a letter addressed to M. Snegur, Dudayev asks him to "use all his influence with the aim of bringing about an immediate unblocking of Iraq and rendering moral and material support for its government." It is not clear why he has turned to Snegur. He has apparently forgotten that Saddam Husayn's friend is not Mircea Snegur but Vladimir Volfovich [Zhirinovskiy].

Rossel Pledges To Revive Ural Republic

MK2112115093 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 21 Dec 93 p 4

[Valeriya Ochinyan report: "Eduard Rossel's Statement. Ural Republic Idea Lives On"]

[Text] The Ural Republic self-proclaimed in Yekaterinburg was eliminated by Boris Yeltsin's edicts in early November. But, much as KOMMERSANT-DAILY supposed, the idea for such a regional entity has not died. The chief advocate of the republic idea, Eduard Rossel, relieved by presidential decision from the position of

head of the Sverdlovsk Oblast administration, was elected, on 12 December, to the Federation Council. He announced to his voters on 18 December that he intends to revive the Urals Republic despite the center's view.

Last Saturday, a statement by Eduard Rossel, former head of the Sverdlovsk Oblast administration and former governor of the Ural Republic, was circulated in Yekaterinburg. Eduard Rossel thanked the voters for the trust and support that secured him a seat in the Federation Council. The disgraced governor assured voters that he was going to continue work to organize a Urals republic, and voiced regret that the federal authorities had an inadequate reaction to Yekaterinburg's initiative. Mr. Rossel's intentions can be seen as quite serious. More so because after his removal, Eduard Rossel took charge of an association for the economic interaction of eight oblasts and republics of the Urals which, in particular, is one of the founders of the interregional joint-stock companies "Uraltitan" [Ural Titanium], "Rossiyskiy Marganets" [Russian Manganese], "Uralskiy Nikel" [Ural Nickel], "Uralskaya Zoloto-Nikelevaya Kompaniya" [Ural Gold-Nickel Company], and so forth. In other words, the regional association led by Rossel brings together the interests of representatives of both the power and industrial lobbies of the country's biggest region.

New Tatarstan Party Draws Fire From Nationalists, Democrats

MK2112122093 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 21 Dec 93 p 4

[Sergey Fedotov report under "Presidential Party Created in Tatarstan" rubric: "The New Party Favors Evolution"]

[Text] Tatarstan intends to maintain its sovereignty: The disruption in the republic of elections to the Federal Assembly and the referendum has reaffirmed this once again. Meanwhile the founding congress of the new Republican Party of Tatarstan called Unity and Progress, which took place last Saturday, showed that Kazan is claiming the role of leader of the Russian autonomies aspiring to consolidate their own oppositions in relations with Moscow.

On 18 December in Kazan the founding congress of the Unity and Progress Republican Party of Tatarstan adopted a program and elected a political council. Its top leadership includes Tatarstan presidential adviser Rafail Khakimov, Supreme Soviet Presidium member Aleksey Kolesnik, and Economy Minister Anatoliy Shchepovskikh. The majority of the new party members are representatives of the republican nomenklatura, in particular heads of the city and district structures of the executive branch. Among the congress guests there were two vice premiers, a Supreme Soviet deputy chairman, and Vice President Vasiliy Likhachev, who described the establishment of the party as a major event for the republic.

The party's tasks include "maintenance of peace and accord; further development of democracy; development and consolidation of Tatarstan's statehood; formation of a mixed economy; raising the well-being of the republic's people; and achieving social justice." The founders' aspirations appear to be quite natural. Addressing the congress, Mr. Khakimov noted that the party will fight not only for Tatarstan's rights but will also assist the other Russian republics in this struggle. Apparently the new political organization wants to lead the movement for sovereignty in those Russian republics that voted against the constitution.

Interestingly, the new party has been opposed by representatives of both democratic and nationalist movements of Tatarstan. They have called it a nomenklatura-style party. It needs to be pointed out, however, that representatives of these movements are inclined to radical actions and appraisal. The new party, meanwhile, promises to use exclusively political methods in its activity. Explaining to KOMMERSANT-DAILY's correspondent the party's tasks, Mr. Kolesnik said that it intends to participate in reforming Tatarstan and Russia "not in a revolutionary but an evolutionary way."

Borderland Regime Established in Kaliningrad

WS2112153293 Kaliningrad YANTARNIY KRAY in Russian 14 Dec 93 p 2

[Report by V. Kostomarov: "Not Everyone Yet Knows About the Borderland"]

[Text] As of 1 December 1993, a resolution issued by the head of the Kaliningrad Oblast Administration establishing the borderland regime throughout the oblast and at border crossings came into effect. The early days of the first winter month proved that not all residents had time to familiarize themselves with this document. This was one of the reasons for holding a press conference attended by representatives of the Kaliningrad border troops staff, the customs, and the Oblast Administration.

Touching on the essence of this document, Colonel Vladislav Prokhoda, chief of staff of the Kaliningrad border troops, noted, in particular, that the borderland regime serves exceptionally for the creation of the necessary conditions for defending the state border. This regime includes the rules of entry, movement, and temporary stay of persons and vehicles in the borderland territory. The five kilometer-wide borderland stretches along both the land and sea state borders—along the coasts of the Baltic Sea, lakes, the banks of rivers and other water reservoirs.

Responding to the question about the recent visit of Security Minister General-Colonel Nikolay Golushko to the Republic of Poland, V. Prokhoda stated:

"Regarding our interaction, an agreement was reached to resolve the problems associated with the border regime and cooperation in border defense on the level of the

Polish border structures and commanders of the Kaliningrad border troops in the near future. There is an agreement on the upgrade and expansion of cable communications and border activities in the interests of both countries."

The question from the "Ostankino" state radio and television committee concerned the demarcation of the border with Lithuania. This is what V. Prokhoda said in reply:

"The legal basis of this issue is still being developed. The interstate commissions are working on it. This work is expected to end next year. The current state border has been marked along the administrative border."

Pavel Bekker, chief of the Administration for Public Security and Kaliningrad Territorial Defense, said in addition that Gariy Chmykhov, first deputy chief of the Oblast Administration, is the chairman of the Russian Commission for the Delimitation of the Border. The last round of talks resulted in a working document defining the entire land border. There are no serious disagreements with Lithuania in principle. On the contrary, both sides have found acceptable compromises. The next round of talks on these issues is scheduled for the beginning of 1994.

As for the sea border, P. Bekker noted that there are some problems that require additional discussions. There are two approaches to this issue. However, since there is no acceptable decision yet, the sides have agreed not to publicize anything.

A question from KRASNAYA ZVEZDA dealt with the border between Russia and Lithuania. It has become known recently that some automatic firearms stolen from a unit of the 11th Army were sent to Lithuania. V. Prokhoda answered that Russia is planning no heavy systems and facilities on the border with Lithuania, as used to be the case on the state border with capitalist countries. This does not mean, however, that the border will not be guarded, or that no measures to improve this work will be adopted. "We will guard the entire border, and not only the crossing points, with the aid of additional border units," said V. Prokhoda.

STRAZH BALTIKI was interested in the manning of border troops. According to the chief of staff of the Kaliningrad border troops, there are certain difficulties. Currently, border troops have only 70 percent of active servicemen. After the transfer of active servicemen to the reserve last fall, the situation has become even more acute. Commanders of border troops are pinning certain hopes on contract service.

In addition, the press conference discussed such issues as selected control at border crossings; cooperation among border troops, customs, and Kaliningrad railway officials; the rules of completing the necessary documents allowing the organization of work on the borderland (they can be obtained at border units and posts); the accommodation of servicemen and their social security. Housing remains the key problem for servicemen in green caps. P. Bekker specified that the regional program of housing for servicemen gives priority to border troops because the latter's situation is the most difficult.

'Oblast Duma' Created in Magadan

OW2112142993 Magadan Radio Magadan in Russian 0800 GMT 21 Dec 93

[From the "Oblast News"]

[Text] The regular meeting of the Oblast Soviet of People's Deputies ended today. The meeting confirmed the structure of the new government body. It will be called the Oblast Duma—a two chamber body. The upper house, the Representative Chamber, will comprise 18 deputies, that is two deputies from each rayon in the oblast and the city of Magadan. The lower house, the Legislative Chamber, will have 13 elected members.

The Small Soviet decided that elections to the local government will be held on 20 March 1994. This decision will become law once it is confirmed by the oblast administration head.

International Affairs

Deputy Foreign Minister Discusses Arms Trade

WS2112123293 Kiev Ukrayinske Radio First Program Network in Ukrainian 1100 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Speaking at a briefing for Ukrainian and foreign reporters on 21 December, Deputy Foreign Minister Borys Tarasyuk, chairman of the national Committee for Disarmament, said: The Ukrainian Government adheres to international norms, principles, and standards, and observes all sanctions imposed by the United Nations in the issues of arms trade. Ukraine does not sell arms to either the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the South African Republic, or Iraq. With regard to selling certain types of arms to Iran, Ukraine is pursuing its own economic interests and observes security principles. Borys Tarasyuk underlined that Ukraine had never sold sea-launched guided missiles to Iran. According to the Ukrainian diplomat, taking advantage of the imperfection of the system of control exercised by the Coordinating Committee for Multilateral Exports Controls, middlemen manage to ship arms, products, and technologies to the states under ban.

Clarifies Missile Deactivation

LD2112210793 Kiev Radio Ukraine World Service in Ukrainian 1700 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Excerpts] [Announcer] We have already reported that a briefing for Ukrainian and foreign reporters was held at the Ukrainian Foreign Affairs Ministry on 21 December. This briefing was attended by my colleague, esteemed Andriy Chyrva.

[Chyrva] [passage omitted: introductory remarks] You may be aware by now of the situation where some of the mass media, in particular REUTERS and the Voice of America, reported yesterday that Ukraine had taken 17 SS-24 intercontinental ballistic missiles off combat alert. This issue, naturally being of great interest to journalists, they wanted to hear the confirmation of that fact from Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister Borys Tarasyuk, who took part in the briefing.

I would like to say that this issue is quite complex and I would like to be precise and quote precisely what Borys Tarasyuk said.

[Announcer] Please do.

[Chyrva] He said that the early deactivation program did not only cover the SS-19 missile systems. This was due to the complexity of these installations, consisting of not only missiles, but nuclear warheads subject to guaranteed maintenance terms of their own. Thus, what it concerns is not separate types of missile systems, but exactly those where the term of guaranteed maintenance is running out, that are being taken off combat alert or are subject to the early deactivation program. This, as it were, is what Mr. Tarasyuk officially stated.

[Announcer] So this is the first report that somewhat contravenes the one carried, in particular, by the REUTERS agency. It adds quite essentially to the accuracy [of what is at issue] too, in my view. That is to say, what concerns is that only those ballistic missiles are at issue that have already become lifeless, as it were, or not combat ready. Is that so?

[Chyrva] Yes, of course. Tarasyuk said that work was under way in Ukraine to carry out the so-called deactivation of missile systems. In essence, it is to remove the warheads and store them in Ukraine at a considerable distance from the missile sites. This is what, in my view, the issue is.

The second important issue, raised by Borys Tarasyuk, was that of the participation of the Ukrainian delegation at the consultative meeting with representatives of Cocom [Coordinating Committee for Multilateral Export Controls] member countries. [passage omitted]

[Chyrva] Another interesting issue: Mr. Tarasyuk produced quite a large folder or file containing materials on the list of commodities and technologies prohibited from being transferred or traded to Ukraine by Cocom member countries. You know that this issue was very sensitive for us at the time of the Cold War and there were restrictions—and very extensively so too—that were in the way of our trade with the West, and that between the West and ourselves. That is why this whole issue now—and Mr. Tarasyuk spoke about it—should be raised and somehow agreed so that our relations in trade and economic relations with the West could, after all, develop properly and so that we could trade, including trade in high technologies and dual-purpose technologies. [passage omitted]

[Chyrva] What I would also like to mention in conclusion is that (?the last) question asked, that of course concerns and interests everybody, was on arms trade, i.e. whether Ukraine trades in weapons.

[Announcer] Which weapons?

[Chyrva] I mean conventional weapons. I do not mean nuclear weapons but conventional weapons. So Mr. Tarasyuk said that on the issue of arms trade Ukraine proceeded from existing principles, and was governed by those bans on trade with those countries in respect of which there were relevant United Nations Security Council sanctions. We all know, and our foreign listeners may know, that these are such countries as the Republic of Yugoslavia, Libya, the Republic of South Africa, and Iraq. These are those countries where we [word indistinct]. As for that, I have already said that it is strictly governed by existing principles. As for where and whom arms [are being sold], it was not (?discussed). [passage omitted]

Zhirinovskiy Emissaries Meet Crimean Counterparts

WS2212090893 Kiev Ukrayinske Radio First Program Network in Ukrainian 1500 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] Zhirinovskiy's emissaries held consultations with their Crimean comrades in arms, leaders of the Crimean Russian Party. Particular emphasis was put on sprucing up the political image of Sergey Shuvaynikov, the party's presidential candidate. According to information obtained from reliable sources, the Russian Liberal Democratic Party guaranteed its little brother financial aid in his fight for the presidential chair. So there is every reason to expect that the local version of Zhirinovskiy, in the person of Shuvaynikov, will soon appear on the Crimean political scene. But will he live up to the expectations of his Moscow-based bosses?

Assembly: Russia's BEC Membership 'Must Be Suspended'

AU2212104493 Kiev UKRAYINSKI OBRIYI in Ukrainian No. 20 (29), Dec 93 p 1

["Statement by the Ukrainian Nationalist Assembly in Connection With the Opening in Kiev on 29 November of the Interparliamentary Assembly of Those Countries That Are Members of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation [BEC]"]

[Text] 1. In view of the fact that the Russian Federation today is the only state among the founders of the BEC that has no parliament, its BEC membership must be suspended.

2. The main objective behind the participation of Russia and Greece in BEC institutions is to prevent a military and political rapprochement between Ukraine and Turkey. The main tasks of the membership of these countries are as follows:

a) To undermine plans for building an oil terminal in Odessa and to prevent economic cooperation between BEC member states on ousting Russian oil from Eastern European markets with the help of the new export line "The Persian Gulf-Istanbul-Ukraine-Baltics and Central Europe."

b) To obstruct political and economic cooperation between Turkey and Ukraine in Crimean matters. A confrontation between Turkey, where there are 5 million Crimean Tatars, and Ukraine, which is financing the return of 500,000 Tatars from Central Asia, is advantageous for Russia in that the Turkish branch of the Tatar diaspora could demand state independence for the Tatar Crimea and its Asian branch would adhere to the goal of national autonomy within the framework of Ukraine. In this way, the destruction of the Tatar movement will be achieved.

c) To prevent any cooperation between BEC member states in opposing Moscow's expansion in the Caucasus.

3. The Ukrainian Nationalist Assembly demands that the Interparliamentary Assembly adopts a document giving the BEC's stance on the Russian-Caucasian wars. Moscow's ambitions are at variance with its status as a "Black Sea country" that has only one Black Sea port.

Legal Aid, Consular Accord Signed With PRC

LD2112173193 Kiev Radio Ukraine World Service in English 0100 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] A protocol on a ratification note exchange was signed at the Ukrainian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Kiev by Deputy Foreign Minister (?Valentyn Lipatov) and Chinese ambassador to Ukraine Zhang Zheng.

The protocol pertains to the Sino-Ukrainian agreement on legal assistance on the basis of reciprocity between China and Ukraine in civic and criminal cases, and to the consular convention signed by the two countries.

National Affairs

Kravchuk: Current Situation Not To Affect Elections

LD2112211393 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1947 GMT 21 Dec 93

[By UKRINFORM correspondent Mikhail Melnik]

[Text] Kiev December 21 TASS—The leadership's inability to assess the situation in Ukraine should not affect the upcoming election campaign, President Leonid Kravchuk said.

Although there are voices saying that the campaign may fail,"our task is to do everything possible for the elections of people's deputies to take place," Kravchuk said at a meeting with the leaders of political parties and movements in Kiev on Tuesday.

He stressed that the elections will take place under conditions of a severe economic slump which reform opponents may use as an argument to accuse the country's leaders of their inability to govern the nation. Others will blame them for severing ties with Russia, he added.

But in either case this is nothing but populism, the president said. People need to be told the truth. "Either we want to strengthen ties with CIS countries, or we want to set up new structures," he added.

Speaking about the current situation in the republic, Kravchuk said that the country is moving towards elections without a new constitution. He believes that debates on a new fundamental law in the new parliament may worsen the situation in the Supreme Soviet. Therefore it is necessary either to amend the constitution, which is unrealistic, or adopt a law on power, the Ukrainian leader emphasised.

Touching upon outside factors influencing the election campaign, Kravchuk pointed out that the Russian factor will be the strongest one. "Regardless of whether we want it or not, there are people who will try to use it, making an accent on the bad life without Russia," Kravchuk said.

Crimean Election Begins; 5 Candidates Registered

PM2112150793 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 21 Dec 93 First Edition p 2

[Nikolay Semena report: "Political Passions in Crimea"]

[Text] The Crimean Central Electoral Commission has already registered five candidates for the presidency of the republic and a further 18 potential contenders have been given lists for the collection of the necessary 5,000 signatures.

In Crimea not a day passes without a congress, conference, or "roundtable" meeting—a veritable storm of political activity. The early deadline for the nomination of candidates, the surprise results of the elections in Russia, and the growing crisis in the republic are the reasons for the haste. The severe economic slump has been aggravated by many social conflicts which seem to be tearing the peninsula apart. While the strike committee created in Sevastopol is issuing demands—the reduction of taxes, a quota system for the distribution of produce and commodities, Ukraine's membership of the economic union, the ratification of Russian as the second state language in the country, and the right to dual citizenship—in Kerch, which is at the other end of Crimea, a special situation has been declared because of a crime wave.

Nikolay Bagrov, chairman of the Crimea Supreme Soviet, has announced his decision to run for election. He has decided to run as an independent candidate.

Various parties are regrouping forces at the moment. It seems that the People's Party, the Republican Party, the "Green" Party, and the Russian-speaking Crimea Movement have agreed on the creation of a "Russia" bloc. The "All-Crimea Voters' Movement" holds views which are close to theirs and may possibly side with the bloc.

However, the strengthening of that bloc, which does not conceal its pro-Russian aspirations, threatens to disrupt the elections as a whole—which would mean a loss of Crimean statehood. The Assembly of Crimean Tartars, like the Ukrainian Civic Congress of Crimea party, has stated that if the candidates do not give guarantees that the inviolability of the borders will be observed, then they will call for an election boycott.

State Independence Party Withdraws From Election

LD2112160693 Kiev Ukrayinske Telebachennya Network in Ukrainian 1400 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] The leadership of the political association State Independence of Ukraine [SIU] has decided that this organization will not take part in the forthcoming election to the Supreme Council. SIU members will run as private individuals. The leaders of the association explain their stance by what they believe to be the defects of certain laws, first of all the Law on Citizenship.

Air Force, Antiaircraft Defense Merger Suspended

LD2112135293 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 0830 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Kiev [dateline as received]—A UNIAN correspondent learned on 20 December that Ukraine's Ministry of Defense collegium, having again examined the problems posed by the unification of the Air Force and Antiaircraft Defense into a single arm of service, "Air Defense Troops," supported proposals by Ukraine's Defense Minister Vitaliy Radetskyy to suspend this process. The legal basis of this decision was the June decree by the Ukrainian president envisaging the unification of the Air Force and Antiaircraft Defense by the end of 1995. This was argued by the need to allocate enormous funds for the unification process, which the state does not have today.

Proceeding from the decision of Ukraine's Ministry of Defense collegium, Vitaliy Radetskyy issued an order to reduce the command of the Air Defense Troops from 180 to 30-40 people. Now they will no longer be in charge of the Air Force and Antiaircraft Defense, but will conduct a feasibility study of possible ways to combine these arms of service.

Supreme Council Adopts Demonopolization Program

LD2112200393 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1834 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Kiev December 21 TASS—The Ukrainian Parliament adopted the programme of demonopolisation of economy and development of competition in 1994-1995.

The demonopolisation programme will be carried out in two stages. The first stage will involve measures aimed at reducing the number of state monopoly structures. Steps will be also taken to create a respective legal and investment basis for carrying out the programme, conducting anti-monopoly regulation and introducing an anti-monopoly law.

The second stage will begin after the economic stabilisation is achieved in the country. This presupposes a developed market infrastructure, a large number of small and medium-size enterprises and foreign businesses operating on the Ukrainian market. The second stage will engage such sectors of the Ukrainian economy as the finance and credit system, the establishment of new and demonopolisation of existing bank structures.

The deputies also adopted a draft concept of social welfare which is based on a comprehensive approach towards restructuring the country's social welfare system

through introducing insurances against temporary or permanent disability, unemployment and industrial accidents.

Special programmes will be worked out to provide financial aid to disabled or lower-income families.

Further on 21 Dec Sitting

LD2112183293 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 1517 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Kiev, 21 Dec—The Ukrainian Supreme Council resumed its plenary sittings. A group of deputies, in particular Ivan Zayets, Anatoliy Tkachuk, and Stepan Volkovetskyy, proposed that the issue of making amendments in the Law on the Elections of People's Deputies should be included in the agenda, which would provide for the election of a deputy by voting for the second time to be by a simple majority of votes, rather than by an absolute one. Otherwise, in Anatoliy Tkachuk's view, it is possible that elections will not take place in around 100 electoral districts.

There were other proposals, such as Ukraine immediately joining the CIS economic union, insisted on by deputy Svitlana Ostroushchenko, and drawing up and adopting a law on the structure of local authorities, put forward by the Ivano-Frankovsk Oblast Council chairman, Stepan Volkovetskyy. Supreme Council Chairman Ivan Plyushch pointed out that the issue of the form of state arrangement and state government in Ukraine could be included in a referendum that could be held on 27 March 1994 alongside the elections.

The session of the Supreme Council passed two framework agreements: 1) The state program of demonopolizing the economy and developing competition, in accordance with an anti-monopoly committee is to be elected and 2) the concept of the social security of the population of Ukraine.

Government Not To Introduce Hryvnya 'In Near Future'

AU2112134993 Kiev MOLOD UKRAYINY in Ukrainian 17 Dec 93 p 1

[Volodymyr Oliynyk report: "There Will Be No Hryvnya as Long as There Is No Government"]

[Text] This was, incidentally, stated by members of the government at a recent news conference for Ukrainian and foreign journalists. Viktor Yushchenko, chairman of Ukraine's National Bank, notified all those present that the hryvnya would not be introduced in the near future; Minister of Finance Mr. [Hryhoriy] Pyatachenko even further reassured the public (and not only those in the audience as everything was being broadcast live throughout Ukraine) that the hryvnya would not be introduced so soon. Government Vice Premier Vasyl Yevtukhov said that unemployment and the bankruptcy of large enterprises were possible in Ukraine in the very near future, although Minister of Labor Mr. [Mykhaylo] Kaskevych told journalists that the extent of the bankruptcy had been estimated and Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk may, at any moment, sign a special edict on organizing so-called public work, which has long been mentioned. Oleh Slyepichev, minister of external economic ties, believes that Ukraine's negative balance will reach several billion Russian rubles by the end of the year. However, if Leonid Kravchuk accepts Slyepichev's proposal on the normalization of the government's external economic activity, then Ukraine will be able to reduce the export-import balance for 1994 to zero parity.

New Association To Promote Free Economic Zone

AU2112135693 Kiev HOLOS UKRAYINY in Ukrainian 17 Dec 93 p 3

[Report by Mykola Horvat from Transcarpathia: "Initiators of the Zone Do Not Lay Down Their Arms"]

[Text] Yet another sociopolitical formation—the Association for Democratic Transformations [ODP]—has emerged in addition to all the others in Transcarpathia. The organizers of the ODP, explaining their motivation for the need of creating it, stated that changes in Ukrainian society and the development of the state do not proceed in an ordered way but are painful and divide the people on the grounds of political, property-related, religious, and ethnic differences. Against this background, an increasing polarization in the state and region is obvious, something that is attested to, in particular, by the discussion by the Supreme Council of the bill on the free economic zone in Transcarpathia. In the opinion of the ODP members, a number of politicians talk about reforms but are, in fact, opposed to them. Having received the levers of political and economic power, they are not interested in promoting true and civilized entrepreneurship but strive to maintain their monopoly on the wild market of goods and money in the conditions of which they have acquired unprecedented riches.

The initiators of the ODP believe that precisely these forces have started a vicious campaign against the real possibility of reforming the economy in the oblast and that they resort to falsification, insinuations, and open lies. In a situation when reformist moods in the state and region are not clearly defined and state power structures act slowly and inconsistently, all of this may lead to a threatening exacerbation of the sociopolitical situation with unforeseeable consequences. The ODP considers itself to be such a force, which is capable of returning Transcarpathian residents a hope for a better life and its stabilization.

The ODP leadership was elected. Serhiy Ustych, first deputy head of the working group, which had elaborated the bill on the Free Economic Zone in Transcarpathia, became its chairman. Its other members also became members of the ODP: Volodymyr Prykhodko, deputy chairman of the oblast state administration; Mykhaylo Tovt, Ukrainian presidential representative in Berehiv

Rayon; Oleksandr Peredriy, director of the Carpathian branch of the International Institute of Management "MIM-Kyyiv," and others.

The ODP also became an initiator of creating a joint pre-election bloc and holding a "roundtable" of centrist forces in order to form a single platform for nominating their candidates for various echelons of power. It appears that supporters of the free economic zone in Transcarpathia have not reconciled themselves to the fact that a corresponding law was rejected and will fight for its adoption.

Sevastopol Citizens Call For Action Against Crime

WS2112122793 Kiev Ukrayinske Radio First Program Network in Ukrainian 2000 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Report attributed to RUKH-PRESS]

[Text] In response to the killing of Andrey Lazebnikov, chief of the Black Sea Fleet press service, the Coordinating Council of Ukrainian Citizens in Sevastopol has appealed to President Leonid Kravchuk, the General Prosecutor's Office, and the Interior Ministry demanding the introduction of a curfew in the city, and redeployment of a National Guard battalion for fighting organized crime. The Coordinating Council also requests that a committee composed of people's deputies be sent to Sevastopol to investigate the work of the local department of the interior and the chain of mysterious murders. The declaration states that if the organization's claims are disregarded, the latter will use its right to form self-defense units to protect citizens of all nationalities.

Militia Official Presents Statistics on Crime

WS2112121193 Kiev UKRAYINA MOLODA in Ukrainian 17 Dec 93 p 4

[Interview with Colonel Oleksandr Fedorovish Shtanko, chief of the Internal Ministry Headquarters, by Stanislav Koldunenko: "Militia and Philosophy"]

[Excerpt] [Koldunenko] Oleksandr Fedorovish, what is the Internal Ministry Headquarters responsible for?

[Shtanko] The headquarters is one of the top structures of the Ukrainian Internal Ministry that provides for the coordination of the ministerial branches, organs, and sections in combating crime and protecting civil order. The headquarters includes the primary militia organs as well.

[Koldunenko] What can you tell me about the current operational situation?

[Shtanko] It is complicated. In November 1993, our statistics listed 289 murders, 3,239 burglaries, 157 rapes, and 1,878 cases of petty crime. Illegal activities are gaining an organized character. We are witnessing the process of the unification of organized crime with business structures, the penetration of crime elements to the foreign economic sphere, credit and banking system, and entrepreneurship.

Currently, we are worried about a dangerous scale of national robbery—the mass exporting of consumer goods, foodstuffs, smuggling of metals, and other strategic raw materials. According to our latest reports, 24-hour illegal exports stand at 1.5 billion karbovanetses. In border villages, a new profession has appeared connected with illegally transporting people across the border.

The establishment of control over the delivery of money to banks has become another important undertaking of late. It happens that more and more cash is not delivered to banks. Regularly, large sums of money are being concealed. This leads to the paralysis of money turnover in the Republic.

In addition, I would like to emphasize that the Ukrainian Supreme Council and the Cabinet of Ministers have recently adopted a package of decrees and resolutions providing for the upgrading of our work for the implementation of public order in Ukraine. The Ukrainian Internal Ministry along with other ministries and departments drafted a program for combating crime, which was adopted by the Supreme Council on 25 June 1993, and created a Coordinating Committee for Combating Corruption and Organized Crime headed by the president.

[Koldunenko] Oleksandr Fedorovish, what, in your opinion, effects the public security to the greatest degree?

[Shtanko] First and foremost, a mountain of unresolved issues in the socioeconomic and legal spheres. Their solution demands time and great efforts. Second, we are disturbed by an explicit opposition from the part of our population to the activities of our law enforcement bodies. Within the last three years, 213 officers were killed and some 1,500 were wounded; in 1993, our officers had to use weapons more than 500 times. By the way, more than 3,500 weapons were stolen from military units.

The crime issue is especially acute with our youth. Young people perform more than 60 percent of criminal acts.

Intoxication on a large scale is our next disaster. Most of our state and public organizations have stopped their efforts to combat it. The militia has been left alone.

However, drug addiction presents a more serious problem for us. According to our information, the drug Mafia of Italy and Columbia would like to enter our domestic market....

[Koldunenko] Our readers would like to know how Ukraine looks like in comparison with other countries.

[Shtanko] According to international statistics, the crime rate in Russia stands at 1,856,500 crimes [as published] per 100,000 people, in the U.S.A.—at 5,820, in Great

Britain—at 6,890, and in Germany—at 7,108. We are not satisfied with this seemingly low crime rate in Ukraine, because the tempo of crime rate in our Republic is very high. This was the reason for the adoption of the State Program for Combating Crime. I can account for the results of its implementation.

First of all, we have managed to slow down the development of the crime situation in the Republic: In comparison with 1992, the 1993 growth of crime rate has decreased from 17.8 to 10.8 percent; while the exposure of crimes has increased from 53.2 to 59.3 percent. This demonstrates the success of our work.

[Koldunenko] People are worried about the militia's activities for the prevention of burglaries and larcenies....

[Shtanko] Burglaries and larcenies compose 35-37 percent of all crimes against property in Ukraine. The majority of such crimes are performed in cities and towns. [passage omitted]

Belarus

Shushkevich To Miss Summit for Health Reasons

LD2112143793 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1400 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Stanislav Shushkevich, chairman of the Belarusian Supreme Soviet, will be unable to take part in the Ashgabat meeting of CIS heads of state for health reasons. As Interfax reports, Shushkevich was admitted to hospital on Monday with acute hypertension and is unlikely to return to work before the end of the year.

The Belarusian delegation will be headed by the first deputy chairman of the parliament.

Accused of 'Faking' Hypertension

LD2112184393 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1438 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Chairman of the Belarussian Supreme Soviet Stanislav Shushkevich will not be able to participate in the Ashgabat summit of heads of CIS member-states.

First Vice Speaker Vyacheslav Kuznetsov reported at the session of the Belarussian parliament Tuesday that on Monday Shushkevich was hospitalized in a Minsk regional clinic suffering from hypertension and would not be able to work until the end of this year. The first deputy chairman of the Belarussian parliament will head the Belarussian delegation at the summit.

However, head of the Belarussian government Vyacheslav Kebich declared to Interfax that Kuznetsov himself deems it expedient to appoint Kebich to the head of the Belarussian delegation because, according to Kebich, "I personally know better the heads of states and heads of governments of CIS member-states."

A source in the Belarussian government told Interfax that Presidents Boris Yeltsin and Stanislav Shushkevich were supposed to make a joint statement on creation of Russia's and Belarus' monetary union.

Addressing the parliament's session Tuesday, Aleksandr Lukashenko, chairman of the Supreme Soviet's interim commission to combat corruption in the supreme echelons of power, accused Shushkevich of faking his hypertension.

Lukashenko asserts that he has carried out "an independent investigation" and learned that Shushkevich was not taken to a hospital after the closed morning session of the Supreme Soviet Wednesday as representatives of the parliament's secretariat reported, but "he has been in the resting room of his office in the government house all day."

Referring to physicians, Lukashenko reported that "yesterday and the day before the state of Shushkevich's health was quite good," however on December 20, on his own initiative, the speaker went to the regional clinical hospital but not a special hospital which is in charge of medical servicing of supreme officials."

Worsening of Shushkevich's state of health occurred December 15 immediately after the closed session of the Supreme Soviet at which Lukashenko accused head of the parliament of financial abuses. For his part, Shushkevich has categorically rejected all accusations.

The chief physician of the governmental hospital, Makarevich, reported to Interfax that "nervous stress which Shushkevich has experienced could be the main reason for his illness."

Supreme Soviet Meets, Discusses Economic Problems

LD2112191393 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1640 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Report by correspondent Petry Makritskiy on 21 December Supreme Soviet session, including recorded comments by Belarusian Prime Minister Vyacheslav Kebich]

[Text] After the hearings on corruption, that gave rise to quite a stir, and are, apparently, not yet completely at an end, the Belarus Supreme Soviet discussed economic problems again today. The year is coming to an end, and decisions on the budget have to be taken. The situation in industrial enterprises and the agrarian sector remains tense, despite the measures the government is taking. It will be extremely difficult to remedy the situation here without integration with neighbors, in the opinion of a numbers of deputies, although there is a realization that there is a need to rely, first and foremost, on one's own potential. Earlier still, the Supreme Soviet ratified the Treaty on Economic Union. A delegation from the republic is going to the meeting of the leaders of the CIS countries in Ashgabat with proposals for its practical implementation.

Answering questions from correspondents from Ostankino Radio and TV, Vyacheslav Frantsevich Kebich, the prime minister of Belarus, said, in particular:

[Kebich] I never lose hope when I am flying to a CIS session, and, as always, I am always a little disappointed as the session progresses. I know that the session may be momentous in many respects, since, in the final analysis, the whole timetable for the formation of the economic union is passing by. So I know that the mood of some heads of state is a very serious, to the extent that it is a question of: To be or not to be.

We personally, are flying in to see that all the agreements dealing with economic union, and a whole collection of other documents are signed at last, and we hope that the meeting in Ashgabat will end on a positive note.

[Makritskiy] The Supreme Soviet has ratified the agreement on entry to the ruble zone. Nearly all the documents have been drawn up, and we have also had personal talks with Viktor Stepanovich Chernomyrdin, in which we reiterated our support for the idea of the two republics entering a unified ruble zone.

Apart from the economic matters that will be discussed in Ashgabat, what other news may we expect?

[Kebich] There will be a separate session of the foreign ministers' Coordinating Council. There will be a defense ministers meeting. So there is a whole collection of documents there. But I do not want to anticipate events. It is better that we know about it [the collection] after the meeting has ended.

May Call Recess

WS2112150993 Minsk BELAPAN in Belarusian 0851 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] On 21 December, the 13th session of the Supreme Soviet continued its debate on the government program for overcoming the economic crisis, the draft budget for 1994, and key trends of the credit-financial policy. According to previous reports, it is possible that the Supreme Soviet will call a recess today, since First Deputy Prime Minister Vyacheslav Kuznetsov is to leave for Ashgabad for a meeting of leaders of CIS countries. Supreme Soviet Chairman Stanislav Shushkevich has been ill since 16 December.

General Estimates Army at 'About 92,000'

LD2112185693 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1438 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] The major stage of the Belarusian Army's reorganization has concluded, deputy chief of Belarusian main staff Major General Vladimir Yakutenko declared to INTERFAX. In his words, at present there are about 92,000 servicemen in the republic's armed forces.

Currently, major forces of the Belarusian Army are deployed near the western borders and this, as observers note, contradicts the national military doctrine. The doctrine stipulates that armed forces should be equally distributed along the whole state border.

However, as Yakutenko asserts, "this is a temporary situation." "It does not mean that our forces are oriented towards the West. They will solve their tasks depending upon the situation," reassured the general.

Servicemen Leader on Clash With Authorities

WS2212103093 Minsk DOBRY VECHAR in Belarusian 6 Dec 93 p 2

[Interview with Ales Stankevich, one of the leaders of the Belarusian Association of Servicemen, by Ales Mikalaychanka; place and date not given: "We Will Get Off Our Knees if We Cast Out the Slaves From Ourselves..."]

[Excerpts] **As is known, the Second Congress of the Belarusian Association of Servicemen [BZV] has been recently held at the House of Writers. The association is comprised of people who believe that the Belarusian Armed Forces should be national not only in form, but also in spirit, and that Belarusian patriotism has the right to exist, as it has in any sovereign country. They believe that the hearts of all citizens should be the source of love for a country and its history, as well as the source of pride of our ancestors' combat glory, no matter where this glory was won—either on the battlefields of Pskov, Blue Waters, Grunwald Field, and Orsha, or in the units of Tadeusz Kosciuszko, Kastus Kalinowski, the Minsk Antifascist Underground, and the Vitebsk Guerrillas. They believe that the time will come, when every child will tell about the complex Belarusian path filled with turbulent unrest and tragedies such as the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, the Polish Republic, the Northwestern Province of Russia, the Belarusian People's Republic, the Belarusian Soviet Socialist Republic, and the Republic of Belarus...**

Yet, how can one revive national honor and pride in the hearts of the Belarusian people? How can one raze out the slavish mentality from the Belarusian psychology? These were the issues addressed by the congress of people who are not afraid to defend the independence and democracy of our motherland.

Following the congress, Ales Mikalaychanka interviewed Ales Stankevich, one of the BZV leaders, chairman of the BZV Minsk Branch.

[Mikalaychanka] Esteemed Mister Ales, what is your assessment of the Second Congress of the BZV?

[Stankevich] I believe that the debates were very constructive. We introduced certain changes to the statute of the BZV, issued two statements and an appeal to citizens, and discussed current events. We did a very good job.

[Mikalaychanka] In my opinion, the speeches by BZV Chairman Mikola Statkevich and other deputies, particularly emphasized one issue: The current government is unpatriotic. Certain delegates even accused the government of national treachery... I believe that BZV is in a deep conflict with the Cabinet of Ministers.

[Stankevich] Yes, it is. However, we did not want this. On 7 September, the government disseminated in the media an official statement signed by the Cabinet of Ministers, which emphasized the latter's negative attitude toward the Belarusian military holiday—the anniversary of the battle of Orsha [battle in the 16th century Lithuanian-Russian war]. On 5 November, the Cabinet of Ministers came forward with another statement, in which it showered abuse on the Belarusian Popular Front [BNF] and BZV, claiming that BNF and BZV were establishing paramilitary units and preparing to attack the government and seize power. How, do you think, should we treat the people from the government after such statements.

[Mikalaychanka] According to a statement issued by the congress, "only thanks to the decisive measures undertaken by BZV and other democratic forces on the eve of the 13th session of the Supreme Soviet, and thanks to the peacefulness of the Belarusian people, the dreams of the Cabinet of Minister members have not come true." Mister Ales, do you really believe that the government

planned to provoke a crisis to impose a state of emergency, and to ban the democratic opposition, which would come forward with a proposition to dismiss the government, claiming that it is responsible for the bankruptcy of the economic policy?

[Stankevich] Yes, we do. We believe that the government really wanted this very much. There is evidence of that—the three lines of the Special Assignment Militia Units troops stationed on Independence Square on 9 November, and the special equipment hidden in the gates of the surrounding houses. We immediately felt in our bones that the government was preparing a provocation. We expected that the provocation would be held on the first day of the Supreme Soviet session. We noticed that the voters waiting for their deputies in front of the Supreme Soviet building were not separated by an iron barrier, as had been the practice before, but by lines of militiamen. We anticipated that had the "foreign" deputies appeared on the doorsteps, hecklers would have jumped on the troops. A fight could have erupted, and events similar to those that happened on 30 October 1988 at the Moscow cemetery could have occurred. To prevent provocateurs from triggering clashes, we drew up a column of our boys. This way, as is known, the meeting between deputies and voters was held in peace that evening. [passage omitted]

The Second Congress also discussed the issue of historical justice...

[Mikalaychanka] Probably, you have in mind the appeal to the people concerning the current geopolitical status of Vilnius?

[Stankevich] But...

[Mikalaychanka] You know, I have somewhat mixed feelings about this document, although I completely agree with it. From one perspective, according to the appeal, an historical injustice occurred 50 years ago: As a result of the conspiracy between Hitler and Stalin, the cradle of our nation, the Belarus' ancient capital Vilnya [Vilnius] was handed over to the Lithuanians, or more precisely—the Samogitians, because it was our ancestors who were called Lithuanians. One must agree with Mister Statkevich, the author of the appeal, that the loss of Vilnya was a bitter lesson for our people. This lesson teaches what could become of a nation, whose fate is decided by foreigners: At the beginning, they steal the nation's name, then, its capital... On the other hand, I understand that today we are not able to come forward with territorial claims against independent Lithuania, which is supported by all our democrats. Additionally, according to the Helsinki agreements, the post-war European borders are inviolable. Don't the BZV leaders fear that certain circles of the Cabinet of Ministers and the Supreme Soviet, or even part of society, will accuse BZV of inspiring international hostilities and revanchist moods, or that even certain democrats will condemn BZV?

[Stankevich] This is our old habit of fighting for the truth, but simultaneously watching others: Do they approve of our fight for justice, or not? I understand that the Lithuanian people have your sympathies—we also support them. They were the first who managed to escape the sticky tentacles of the USSR, having previously suffered the January 1991 tragedy. But, this is not the reason why one should deny the fact that Lithuania received Vilnya following the Ribbentrop-Molotov pact. By the way, at the same time, this very pact is sharply criticized by the Baltics. Criticizing the forceful unification of the Baltic states with the USSR, they should find the courage to admit that Belarus also suffered from this totalitarian conspiracy. The handing over of Vilnya to the Lithuanian Socialist Soviet Republic was a gross historical injustice. Are you accusing BZV of a revanchist attitude? Even the Supreme Soviet issued on 29 March 1990 an appeal to the then Lithuanian leadership on this issue, however, the appeal was aimed at another goal—to prevent Lithuania from leaving the empire. Nevertheless, the merit of the document was just, and we approve it. We do recognize the Helsinki agreements, however, our borders in the USSR did not have international importance. Nonetheless, we realize that both Belarus and Lithuania fell victims to the predatory policy of czarist Russia and communist USSR. Therefore, the issue of Vilnya should be resolved carefully, in a civilized manner, and peacefully. But, this issue must be resolved. Unfortunately, the leadership of our state, having come forward with such a just appeal in 1990, today, forgets about this issue, and even refuses to admit that the Lithuanian Government denies Belarusian citizens the elementary right to visit our ancient capital. This fact, among others, has forced us to issue the appeal to the people.

[Mikalaychanka] Other border problems were also addressed at the Second Congress. I recall the speech by Anatoliy Hurynovich, deputy chairman of the Minsk Council of BZV, in which he stated that our neighbors should always remember whose forefathers lived on the lands of Pskov, Smolensk, Chernihiv, and Bransk...

[Stankevich] I understand Mister Hurynovich. The Belarusian issue must not be buried at the graveyard of history, only because we are tolerant, or our neighbors are democratic or powerful. We should gradually settle our border problems, taking into account historical justice and respect for our nation. Otherwise, we will see Zhirinovskiy, who has recently claimed that Vilnya is an integral part of Russia, annexing Belarus to his state. This gentleman will again reduce our country to six counties, as it already happened in the past...

[Mikalaychanka] However, we are living in times that are very adverse to Belarusian patriotism. These are the times of patriotic nihilism... Collaborators are gathering strength... I wish that the BZV ideas would find their way to the hearts of our citizens.

[Stankevich] In fact, the time is very unfavorable for us. Patriotic servicemen are persecuted in the Army, as has been repeatedly reported by DOBRY VECHAR. Certain youth organizations endorse the idea of the reanimation of the Soviet Union and disdain Belarusian history, culture, and language. The idea of patriotic education is neglected. Additionally, certain media wage open war against BZV, accusing us of all sorts of sins, and they do

not give us an opportunity to respond to these allegations. Nevertheless, we do not give up. The time will come, when all Belarusian citizens will consider themselves conscious sons and daughters of this land and this society, which is called Belarus and the Belarusian People. Only all together, we will be able to get our state off its knees... We will achieve this, when we cast out the slaves from ourselves. God help us!

Industrialist Discusses Common CIS Oil Market

WS2112130693 Minsk DOBRY VECHAR in Russian 13 Dec 93 p 2

[Interview with Vyacheslav Vasyukhin, president of the Industrial Association INTERBEL, by RID correspondent Yelena Rubezh; under the "Current Interview" rubric; place and date not given]

[Text] The Industrial Association INTERBEL was formed in 1988 with primary activity in the field of oil extraction, refining, and sales. Our correspondent interviews INTERBEL president Vyacheslav Vasyukhin on the chronic energy crisis.

[Rubezh] **Mister Vasyukhin, do you think that the creation and existence of a "single energy area" (analogous to a "single ruble zone") on the territory of the former USSR is possible in principle?**

[Vasyukhin] The disintegration of the Union energy complex has followed as a consequence of the Soviet Union's disintegration. Now the main problem is in the creation of an interstate council for energy resources. Time will show whether this council will develop some working body, or will confine itself to declarations. The current energy area is conditioned by earlier links and means of transportation. However, the changing of those links and transportation schemes, if it is going to take place following the external political interrelations, demands much time.

[Rubezh] **But can one imagine a common fuel and energy market that includes the countries producing energy resources (in which, in addition, the production is steadily falling) and countries which generally export these energy resources?**

[Vasyukhin] In the ideal, undoubtedly yes. For instance, European countries have come together in the EC. However, the CIS countries are a far way off from the European standard of market economic development. It is necessary, following the OPEC example, not only to agree on the quotas of oil extraction and on oil prices, but also to establish procedures.

[Rubezh] **However, the main point is that, no matter how good or how bad, Russia is implementing market reforms at full speed, while these reforms are being hopelessly neglected in Belarus. How, in such a situation, can economic relations with Russia be built?**

[Vasyukhin] The achievement of these relations with Russia depends on how serious Russia is about using its potential as a control lever with respect to its neighbors. For instance—the customs system. With the help of this mechanism, Russia controls the minimum price of export oil. As a result, a rigid price barrier has been established below the average world price. It must be taken into account that the functioning technology at Belarusian oil refining plants and the refining yield (in Europe—90 percent; in Belarus—50 percent, with the remainder yielding black oil) do not allow an enterprise to be profitable at a price level about $90.

Therefore, the rigid position adopted by Russia is a stimulus for our Republic to reconsider its approach to market economy.

Pri ate TV Channel To Operate in Minsk

WS2212091093 Minsk Radio Minsk Network in Belarusian 0400 GMT 22 Dec 93

[Text] The Minsk Television Channel Eight has resumed its broadcasts. Although viewers have long waited for this day, the waiting has been even harder for the managers and workers of the three private television companies—MM4, Ramak CB, and MKT, since they were ready to begin their broadcasts already several months ago. They hired specialists and bought American movies and shows. Henceforth, their problems will cease to exist. The Channel Eight will broadcast its programs eight hours a day—three hours in the morning and five hours in the evening.

Moldova

Snegur Rejects 'Ultimatum' of Gagauz Republic

LD2112140793 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1300 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Moldovan President Mircea Snegur has rejected the ultimatum issued by the leaders of the self-proclaimed Gagauz Republic, who demanded that a special legal status be granted to settlements predominantly populated by Gagauzes.

Military Cooperation Planned With Belarus

LD2112153693 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1414 GMT 21 Dec 93

[By MOLDOVA-PRESS for TASS]

[Text] Chisinau December 21 TASS—The heads of the Moldovan and Belarusian Defence Ministries have adopted a programme of cooperation. It was signed during a visit by the Belarusian delegation headed by Defence Minister Pavel Kozlovski to Chisinau.

In the course of the visit, bilateral cooperation between the two ministries in the fields of military technique, exchange of information and personnel training were discussed.

Tajikistan

Afghan President Rabbani Continues Talks in Dushanbe

Ends First Round of Talks

LD2112203893 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1800 GMT 21 Dec 93

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature; prepared by Andrey Pershin, Andrey Petrovskiy, and Vladimir Shishlin; edited by Boris Grishchenko]

[Text] President Borhanoddin Rabbani of Afghanistan and Tajik leader Imamali Rakhmanov have ended the first round of private talks in Dushanbe by reaching agreement on an early repatriation of Tajik refugees. Rabbani who arrived in Tajikistan on Sunday spoke of wanting to open several other U.N.-controlled checkpoints on the common border to speed up the repatriation of refugees. The two leaders have both agreed that dialogue between the government and opposition was the only way of achieving peace in Tajikistan.

Rabbani expressed understanding of Tajikistan's concern over high tension on the Afghan-Tajik border. Agreement was reached that the two sides would cooperate to try to make their common border one of friendship and peace.

The two sides pledged commitment to resuming full scale trade and economic links with each other.

On Monday, the Afghan leader went on a tour of the country's large Khatlon and Leninabad regions meeting with the local clergy and visiting local Islamic sacred places in the towns of Kulyab and Khudjand.

Seeks Rapprochement

LD2112185593 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1438 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Afghanistan's President Borhanoddin Rabbani declared that the iron curtain which has existed between Tajikistan and Afghanistan has been broken. Now both countries can look for optimal ways to solve the existing problems, Rabbani declared during his meeting with teachers and students of Tajik State University in Dushanbe. Rabbani is on an official visit in Tajikistan now.

In his words, Afghanistan is ready to maintain friendly relations with Russia. At the same time Rabbani underlined that he does not accuse the Russian people of everything that Afghanistan has experienced during the 10-year war.

Signing of a treaty, agreements, and a protocol on cooperation in the sphere of air traffic between Kabul and Dushanbe and Rabbani's press conference scheduled for Tuesday have been postponed until December 22.

On Tuesday Rabbani is to have a private meeting with Speaker of the Tajik parliament Imamali Rakhmanov.

Prolongs Visit for 'Technical Reasons'

LD2112150593 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1305 GMT 21 Dec 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Galina Gridneva]

[Text] Dushanbe December 21 TASS—President of Afghanistan Borhanoddin Rabbani had to prolong his visit to Tajikistan for one day because the signing of the agreed documents had been delayed "for technical reasons".

The signing ceremony was scheduled for Tuesday, but TASS learned from the administration of the Tajik parliament speaker that the ceremony was moved up to Wednesday because of "purely technical reasons" and that "full mutual understanding had been reached on all discussed issues". No explanation of the "technical reasons" was provided.

Discussed in Dushanbe were the treaty on friendship and cooperation, a number of trade and economic agreements, documents on the Tajik-Afghan border and on refugees.

The Afghan-proposed customs agreement will be signed after Tajikistan studies it in detail.

Visits Science Academy, Meets Mufti

LD2112145293 Dushanbe Radio Tajikistan Network in Tajik 1200 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] The official government delegation of the Islamic State of Afghanistan, headed by Afghan President Borhanoddin Rabbani, paid a visit to the Department of Oriental Manuscripts of the Academy of Sciences of Tajikistan today. They familiarized themselves with the priceless treasures of this fund.

Later, the distinguished guests paid a visit to the muftiyot of the Muslims of Tajikistan. Rabbani had a private talk with Fathullo Sharifzoda, the mufti of the Muslims of the Republic. Rabbani also met with religious representatives and performed afternoon prayers.

Imamali Rakhmanov, head of state and chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Republic of Tajikistan, accompanied the distinguished guests during their meetings.

Resignation of Prime Minister Abdullodzhanov Reviewed

Opposition Radio Views Dismissal

LD2112225493 (Clandestine) Voice of Free Tajikistan in Tajik 0600 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Excerpts] Imamali Rakhmanov, Speaker of the Tajikistan parliament, decreed the dismissal of Abdumalik Abdullodzhanov as chairman of the Tajikistan Council of Ministers and appointed Abdujalil Samadov as his

temporary replacement. This sudden decision was announced Saturday evening and the people of Tajikistan began the Sunday (?by wondering what happened).

Our correspondent in Dushanbe, Sharif Rahmonpur, sent us this report:

The news of the dismissal of Abdumalik Abdullodzhanov as chairman of the Tajikistan Council of Ministers was first officially announced on the Republic's television, although rumors had previously spread in the capital in this connection. State television announced that Abdullodzhanov had been appointed ambassador to Russia and that an embassy will soon be opened there. The television, however, gave no further explanation. [passage indistinct]

The question arises: What was the reason behind such a sudden decision by Rakhmanov? The fact is that Abdullodzhanov came to the top with the arrival of the present government. Although some years ago, particularly during the time of [former first secretary of the Communist Party of Tajikistan] Kahor Mahkamov, when he was the minister of grain products his name was mentioned as one of the main thinkers of the administration. Later, at the time of the government of national reconciliation he was appointed prime minister of Tajikistan.

Although he now denies it, in the past he was attached to the popular forces, and was openly or secretly providing financial and even military assistance to them. The Kafarnihon front functioned with the support of the head of government. On several occasions [words indistinct] he stated clearly that his only wish was to annihilate the forces of Sangak [Sangak Safarov, leader of the National Front of Tajikistan, killed earlier this year].

However, [words indistinct] he was slowly swayed by Imamali Rakhmanov to change his views. The original decision and agreement was that he would not only fully take over the reins of government but would generally control the soviets. However, Rakhmanov was much trickier than him and it was soon that he stamped his rule both over the state and the government. This second defeat for Abdullodzhanov came from the moment he was appointed chairman of the Council of Ministers. The government, which consisted of the criminal accomplices of Rakhmanov who spent the Republic's budget on military to defeat the opposition forces, caused the defeat of the [word indistinct] economic policies of Abdullodzhanov. A few days before his dismissal he stated this in Moscow [words indistinct].

However, experts believe that the Abdullodzhanov team did not have a specific economic program from the beginning and during the one year in office was even unable to complete the government structure. Members of the government majority who were appointed on the personal recommendation of Rakhmanov with advice from Sangak were basically criminal elements and had no position higher than the director of a collective farm. This was the reason that the agrarian policy collapsed in the hands of Habibullo Tabarov. The Ministry of Health also totally declined with the help of Alamkhon Ahmadov. The Ministry of Internal Affairs and the National Security Committee were both transformed to the sources of criminality, etc, etc.

In August of this year for the first time the head of government officially expressed dissatisfaction with the work of his cabinet and for the first time officially acknowledged that his ministers were not up to their jobs. [passage indistinct]

Generally, under the premiership of Abdollodzhanov, Tajikistan has weakened from the economic point of view and the people's living standards declined sharply [words indistinct]. On the other hand, diplomats say that there were political aims behind the dismissal of Abdullodzhanov.

As reported, the regular session of the Supreme Soviet has been called for 24 December and experts believe that the session will examine personnel issues. [passage omitted]

There is a prediction that Moscow probably wants to keep Abdullodzhanov for the future and to return him soon as leader of the Republic, although this prediction does not seem to conform with the reality that Moscow will be promoting someone who is discredited. [passage indistinct]

Voluntary Resignation Claimed

LD2112203493 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1800 GMT 21 Dec 93

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature; prepared by Andrey Pershin, Andrey Petrovskiy, and Vladimir Shishlin; edited by Boris Grishchenko]

[Text] As reported earlier, Abdumalik Abdullodzhanov was dismissed from his post of Tajikistan's prime minister by the Presidium of the republic's Supreme Soviet. His duties have been temporarily taken over by Vice Premier Abduljalil Samadov.

No official explanation of the move has been forthcoming but informed sources in Dushanbe told INTERFAX that Abdullojanov had resigned of his own accord and taken up a diplomatic job.

The former premier is expected by the sources to be appointed Tajikistan's ambassador to Russia. (The republic has had only a plenipotentiary in Moscow - IF). This position is equivalent to first vice premiership in Tajikistan.

Observers think that the Abdullodzhanov government has failed in implementing Tajikistan's economic program. What is more, the living standards have fallen, the prices skyrocketed, inflation is raging. Cotton was not harvested or stored for lack of fuels and greases. Bread is in short supply. Industrial production has stopped or is about to stop.

Abdullojanov is a third Tajik premier to resign. His predecessors were Ezatullo Khaiyeyev and Akbar Mirzoyev. The cabinet has remained largely intact.

The upcoming session of the Supreme Soviet will have a final say in the matter.

Reasons for Dismissal Analyzed

MK2112131093 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 21 Dec 93 p 3

[Oleg Panfilov report under the "Tajikistan" rubric: "Prime Minister Demoted to Envoy Plenipotentiary. A New Round of Power Struggle Begins"]

[Text] Tajikistan television has carried a report on the voluntary resignation of Prime Minister Abdumalik Abdulladzhanov and on appointing him the Republic of Tajikistan's envoy plenipotentiary to the Russian Federation. This event marks an end to the one-year-plus tenure of the former grain products minister, who was appointed Council of Ministers chairman in September 1992 at the recommendation of opposition leaders. However, Abdulladzhanov, who flatly denies this, managed to distance himself from the national reconciliation government at the 10th Supreme Soviet session, which was held in November of last year in Khudzhand and was proclaimed "historic" by the current Tajikistan leaders. Upon appointing what he called a new, "professional" Council of Ministers makeup, Abdulladzhanov, however, proved unable to deliver the goods and the Tajikistan economy was brought to a critical point.

Nonetheless, a situation in which Abdulladzhanov has found himself could hardly be called auspicious, even if he were really a professional. Under the Constitution, all the so-called power ministries—the Internal Affairs Ministry, the National Security Committee, and the Defense Ministry—are subordinated to the head of state, Imamali Rakhmanov. This means that it is not the former prime minister who is to blame for the fact that armed groups of former People's Front members have been operating with impunity in the republic's southern areas, that the formation of the government's own armed forces has become stuck after setting up a single battalion, and that pre-trial cells are packed with detainees. The Tajikistan chiefs' current internal policy has been in large measure influenced by inter-clan strife, which, of course, does not help economic development. Therefore, Abdulladzhanov's forced resignation is a result of differences between the Kulyab and Khudzhand groupings.

The crisis—both political and economic—will continue to deepen until Imamali Rakhmanov and a new government chief (by some accounts it will be Abduzhalil Sa[illegible]lov, representative of Leninabad Oblast) takes steps to stabilize the situation both inside the republic and [illegible] the Tajik-Afghan border. The visit by Afghan President Rabbani to Dushanbe is a formality which will have little influence in terms of stabilizing the situation, because neither Rakhmanov nor Rabbani control armed formations inside their countries. Like his Afghan counterpart, Rakhmanov will have to reckon with a lack of confidence in him on the part of the republic's two largest oblasts—Leninabad and Badakhshan—with Gissar Valley areas and a number of former Kurgan-Tyube Oblast districts gradually joining them. Warnings of Russian servicemen are unlikely to deter hit-men of the Resistance Council, who have kept up pressure on border guards and the 201st Motorized Rifle Division for a whole year.

According to an old Soviet tradition, the prime minister will be exiled to Moscow, where he will replace the current envoy plenipotentiary, Siradzhiddin Nasreddinov. Apparently, even his allies in the Russian Government did not help Abdulladzhanov. He is unlikely to come closer to the opposition, either, because it has not forgiven his betrayal at last year's session.

Turkmenistan

President Niyazov on Ties With Russia, CIS

PM2212104193 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 22 Dec 93 First Edition p 2

[Interview with President Niyazov by Vladimir Kuleshov; place and date not given: "Saparmurad Niyazov: Ashgabat Summit Should Break Ice of Formalities in Relations Within CIS"]

[Text] [Kuleshov] Whether the CIS will continue to exist or not is the key issue for the December summit. It is no secret that the model of the Commonwealth that has existed for the past two years has failed to meet the requirements of the states, which need each other....

[Niyazov] No community can function fruitfully if it lacks the main thing—constructive dialogue and multifaceted consultations. The entire civilized world is based on a tried-and-tested system of interstate ties regulated by a rule-of-law mechanism. Under the conditions of our transitional period this mechanism should primarily be based on bilateral ties that make it possible to give the greatest consideration to the needs of states and the diversity of their stages of development. We jumped in at the deep end, so to speak, drowning in endless documents and agreements. I hope that the coming summit will break the ice of formalities that has shackled relations within the CIS, whereby their natural development was hampered by parasitism, suspicion, and an oversimplified approach to interstate ties.

[Kuleshov] What initiatives is Turkmenistan bringing to the Ashgabat meeting?

[Niyazov] It is important to retain all the goodwill that bound our peoples in a common history. When Turkmenistan first put forward the idea of associate membership of the CIS economic union, not everyone understood or supported us. But we saw no opportunity for ourselves to develop further within the old-style ruble

zone. Our current key idea is cooperation on the basis of sovereign equality in the system of international relations. I hope that this time it will meet with proper understanding and support.

[Kuleshov] Are you suggesting that the CIS framework be expanded?

[Niyazov] Why not? Mankind is on the brink of the 21st century, which is already being seen as a century of universal integration. We cannot fail to note the role in this worldwide process that is allocated to the new historical bloc of states that has emerged not just in place of the former USSR but in the immense geopolitical area amid all the land masses. We are thinking above all of the principle of expediency.

Take one simple example—foreign partners working in Turkmenistan's oil and gas sector and representing quite distant countries have come to the conclusion that it is far simpler, easier, and cheaper to bring in equipment from Russia, say, than from Argentina. Currently the mechanism for this kind of partnership is unregulated. But could the Baltic states or, say, our southern neighbors really have anything against reducing the distance over which business and commercial ties are conducted? All the more so as we have every reason to be proud of our friendship with Russia and our mutual trust.

[Kuleshov] In the opinion of diplomats from many countries, the treaty of friendship and cooperation between Russia and Turkmenistan is one of the most successful acts in the two states' foreign policy activity. And friendship and cooperation means constant progress in implementing former agreements and in preparing new ones. It would be logical to expect this in connection with President Boris Yeltsin's visit to Turkmenistan....

[Niyazov] Indeed, the level of mutual understanding between Russia and Turkmenistan has increased considerably. Since the first few days of the sovereignization process Turkmenistan has been the soul mate of the Russian reformers. This applies above all to the genuine recognition of the very essence of the concepts of "independence" and "sovereignty." The reforms undertaken by Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin, and his policy of creating a new Russia that is powerful, stable, and democratic have not been understood or understood correctly by everyone. It has seemed to some people that the transition from a union structure to the commonwealth format merely required some political cosmetic touches. In actual fact it required deep-seated political and economic reforms.

Russia is our decisive partner not only in the sphere of military cooperation, which makes it possible to effectively regulate military and border issues. All contacts have been considerably stepped up. But we will not be resting on our laurels. I am convinced that our Russian partners are lagging behind considerably in entering the Turkmen market—above all, the oil and gas market. We have nothing to divide up in this area—we stressed this clearly in our concept for the development of the oil and gas sector up to the year 2020. Implementation of this plan is inconceivable without the participation of Russia, its capital and firms, and its considerable scientific and industrial potential on a mutually advantageous basis. We plan to build new gas pipelines, and to develop new oil fields together with Russian partners—seeing this as a colossal and largely untapped reserve of cooperation. But we must regrettably admit that things in this area have been delayed to a very great extent. During President Yeltsin's visit we intend to formulate a specific action program.

[Kuleshov] In your message to the Russian president you proposed discussing a number of important agreements whose significance goes far beyond the framework of cooperation between the two states. For instance, the agreement on dual citizenship and migration. How did this initiative arise? There are known to be no particular problems in Turkmenistan with the migration of the Russian-speaking population.

[Niyazov] It is finally time that all our relations reached a civilized level of international legal regulation. Incidentally, we also propose signing agreements on the avoidance of dual taxation and on encouraging and providing mutual protection for investments—these acts apply to all and sundry.

No, nobody is fleeing Turkmenistan today. What have been dubbed the "problems of the Russian-speaking population in our nearest neighbors" do not exist here. But it would be superficial not to see or realize that, for many reasons, the growth in national self-awareness is being accompanied everywhere—here included—by negative trends. It is far harder to get over incidents rather than to prevent them in the first place. In this sense we have achieved a lot. A law has been issued making any infringements of people's rights on the grounds of ethnic origin a serious crime.

Armenia

Tension, Fighting Reported in Karabakh, Other Areas

NC2112180993 Yerevan Radio Yerevan in Azeri 1430 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Dear listeners, we now present a report on the latest incidents in the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic [NKR] and along the border between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

As a rule, Azerbaijan's military subunits continue to undermine the cease-fire agreements, fire on the Armenian defense positions, and launch large-scale attacks. The enemy side has remained committed to its traditions. It has launched operations in violation of the agreement on a temporary cease-fire that was reached through Russian mediation. Azerbaijan's military units in Agdzhabedinskiy Rayon attacked Martuninskiy Rayon after intensely shelling that area with rockets and artillery units. Violent clashes took place until 1300. Azerbaijan's military units were destroyed in the fighting once again. Their attack was rebuffed, and they were forced to retreat. Some 57 enemy soldiers were killed, and dozens of others were wounded along that part of the front line.

It should be noted that the Azerbaijan National Army [ANA] has lost many men over the last six or seven days. Some 350 Azerbaijani troops were killed. Three tanks were captured; three tanks were hit; and three tanks were left in the neutral zone during that period. Several of Azerbaijan's military vehicles and some of its technical equipment were disabled. However, Azerbaijan has preferred to ignore its losses, as has been the case in the past. That republic has continued to maintain its military operations, which makes the situation worse.

Meanwhile, the NKR military intelligence units have reported that Azerbaijan is continuing to mass reinforcements and military equipment in areas close to the NKR border.

Azerbaijan's mass media organs claimed that the Armenian side lost many men in the recent fighting. The NKR defense headquarters described these reports as unfounded. Only one soldier was killed, and two others were wounded in the latest fighting.

The situation along the NKR battlefronts has been relatively peaceful during the past day. Regrettably, however, the situation on the border between Armenia and Azerbaijan is worsening. Several residential areas in Armenia have been fired on intensely from Azerbaijan with various types of arms. Apparently, the enemy is trying to draw Armenia into a wide-scale war, regardless of what may happen. However, the Armenian side has remained committed to its declaration that it will observe a unilateral cease-fire. The Armenian military units have refrained from returning fire.

The Armenian Ministry of Defense Press Center has disclosed that the military positions in Mazanly in Azerbaijan's Kazakhskiy Rayon fired on (?Ilansk) and the defense positions in Idzhevanskiy Rayon with machine guns and mortars from 0855 to 1000 on 19 December. The ANA units also fired on the border areas in Idzhevanskiy, Noyemberyanskiy, and Tavushskiy Rayons at 1130 on the same day. Meanwhile, Azerbaijan's military units prepared for combat operations. They fired on the Armenian positions in the vicinity of Paravakar and Nerkin-Karmiragyur in Tavushskiy Rayon. They also fired on the defense position on the (?Getansavar) heights. An armed group crossed Armenia's border at about 1100. The resolute measures taken by the Armenian border guards forced the group to withdraw from our territory. No one was wounded on the Armenian side.

Voskepar and the Voskepar-(?Ilansk) roadway in Novemberyanskiy Rayon were fired on at 1715 on the same day. The Armenian side refrained from launching retaliatory operations.

Military operations were also carried out along the border between Armenia and Azerbaijan yesterday. Azerbaijan's military units fired on the defense positions around Paravakar in Tavushskiy Rayon at 1000 and 1036 yesterday. The Armenian side did not return the fire.

There were no serious incidents along the border today. However, predicting how long the peaceful situation will continue is difficult because Azerbaijan launches provocative activities whenever it wishes to do so.

President Signs Decrees on Religious Activity, Drugs

NC2112194393 Yerevan Armenia's Radio First Program Network in Armenian 1800 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosyan today signed the Decree on Measures to Ensure Legality of the Religious Activities on the Territory of Armenia, and the Decree on Measures to Strengthen the Fight Against Narcotics Trafficking and Drug Addiction.

The full text of the decrees will be published in HAYASTANI HANRAPETUTYUN.

Presidential Edict Aids Private Food Importers

LD2112203693 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1800 GMT 21 Dec 93

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature; by Andrey Pershin, Andrey Petrovsky, and Vladimir Shishlin; edited by Boris Grishchenko]

[Text] President Levon Ter-Petrosyan has issued a decree aimed at providing more favorable conditions for private food importers.

The decree, signed on Monday, among other things instructs the government to revise the ban, temporarily imposed on July 26, on trade for hard currency cash.

It also exempts from the value-added tax the import and marketing, both wholesale and retail, of basic foodstuffs such as sugar, butter, cheese and other milk products.

Firms importing and selling food, as of December 20, may only be audited with special permission from the government, but they must make quarterly reports to tax inspectorates.

Armenia's Central Bank has set new currency exchange rates, 77 drams to the U.S. dollar and 5.9 drams to 100 Russian rubles, as compared to the former rates of 50 drams to the dollar and four drams to 100 rubles.

Prime Minister Grant Bagratyan told INTERFAX Armenia needed $15 Mn [million] every month to keep its currency stable. Half of the sum had to be in cash, he said.

Bagratyan said the government was negotiating with the International Monetary Fund and foreign states a hard currency loan to stabilize the dram, but "there are still no tangible results."

IF Note: The dram has remained stable for the past week on the black market, being worth 16 rubles or $0.013.

Reliable sources told INTERFAX the government had launched a set of measures to stabilize the dram. Thus, it has given hard currency allocations to commercial banks and has unofficially lifted the ban on trade for Russian rubles to stop traders from buying their merchandize outside Armenia.

Economic Plight Seen Forcing Concessions

MK2112134093 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 21 Dec 93 p 3

[Armen Khanbabyan report in the "Armenia" column: "There Will Be No Foreign Credits. The Government Can Only Count on Its Own Forces"]

[Text] Barely launched, the national currency (the dram) has depreciated four- to five-fold, and prices have grown correspondingly. The stabilization promised by the government never came. More than 90 percent of the Republic's population has found itself living below the poverty level.

Of course, the parliament demanded an explanation from the government on this count. The opposition is pressing for the cabinet's resignation and a redistribution of powers between the executive and legislative branches of power. Attacks on the cabinet this time around are being led by deputies from the National Democratic Union, which is somewhat strange since one of the members of this faction, Tigran Sarkisyan, heads the parliamentary commission on stabilization of monetary circulation. The parliamentarians maintained, however, that the failure was caused not so much by the mistakes in this commission's activity as primarily by the faulty methods employed by the government. Seeing that criticism in the Supreme Soviet is for the most part of a perfectly populist character, Prime Minister Grant Bagratyan demanded additional emergency powers for the government and in particular for the Internal Affairs Ministry which, in his words, would allow the fight against the shadow economy and economic crimes to be intensified. Of course, such demands provoked an upsurge of indignation among the deputies, but on the whole this regular clash between the parliament and the government ended in a draw: The cabinet has again retained its positions, although it did not get any additional powers.

It is symptomatic, however, that during the debate disagreements emerged, for the first time, over approaches and assessments between President Levon Ter-Petrosyan and Vice President Gagik Arutyunyan. Whereas Bagratyan received the president's speech with understanding, Gagik Arutyunyan, who only 1.5 years ago was acting head of the cabinet, made a number of pointedly critical remarks toward his successor. The main among them was that, in the vice president's opinion, the government is still not allowing the private, commercial, and intermediary structures to have a free hand, while it is incapable itself of ensuring normal food and fuel supplies to the Republic and the shipment of export goods.

Addressing a conference with industrialists, Prime Minister Bagratyan said that one should not expect aid from Western countries and international financial organizations. Approximately $100 million earmarked by the IMF to stabilize the dram has been frozen for purely political considerations. Creditors believe that these funds may be used for the war in Karabakh. The premier also noted that as of now, Russian credit lines for Armenia are also closed. This is hardly a coincidence, especially given that almost at the same time a gas pipeline was blown up in Georgia while a strong offensive by the Azerbaijani Army began in Karabakh. It is quite likely that both Russia and the West, vying for influence in Azerbaijan, have decided to show loyalty with respect to Baku at Armenia's expense.

In an apparent response to the vice president's appeals, the government made a decision whereby next year will be a year of export for the national industry.

It is hard to say how fruitful the contemplated measures will be and whether an active export policy will be implemented in the context of a transport and energy blockade. Signs are that the government understands that its efforts are at best capable of alleviating the situation somewhat, but without foreign credits it will hardly be possible really to rectify the situation. And since the extension of credits is made conditional on political concessions, it can be expected that in the near future Yerevan officialdom, stimulated by a sharp

increase in social dissatisfaction, may come out with new peacemaking initiatives and proposals on resolving the Karabakh problem.

Azerbaijan

President Aliyev Continues Talks in Paris

NC2112173593 Baku Azerbaycan Radio Televiziyasi Television Network in Azeri 1600 GMT 20 D c 93

[Text] President Geydar Aliyev's visit to France is continuing. Our special correspondent, Seyyad Agdabaly, has called us to report the following:

[Begin Agdabaly recording] President Aliyev and the officials who are accompanying him—Jean Perrin, France's ambassador to Azerbaijan, Foreign Minister Gasan Gasanov, and other state and government officials—visited the Louvre Museum early this morning. President Mitterrand is very pro d of this museum. President Aliyev's visit, which was suggested by President Mitterrand, indicates the high regard the French president has for him.

President Aliyev met with the officials of the French Foreign Ministry Press Center in the afternoon. A banquet was held in his honor. President Aliyev briefed his audience in detail on the situation in Azerbaijan, Armenia's broadening aggression, and the refugee problem. He also explained that the aggression against Azerbaijan is linked with Armenia's claims on Azerbaijan's territory. Later, President Aliyev received (?Reiner Strut), president of the [words indistinct] Pharmaceutical Drugs Company. They discussed the possibility of broadening the relations between that company and the related ministries and organizations in Azerbaijan.

President Geydar Aliyev will hold talks with President Mitterrand late this evening. He will also sign the Paris Charter today. A document on friendship and cooperation will be signed between France and Azerbaijan later.

President Aliyev's visit to France is continuing. He will receive Foreign Minister Alain Juppe at his residence tomorrow. Later, he will deliver a speech at the Administration of International Diplomacy [name as heard], receive the president of the Elf-Aquitaine Company, and visit UNESCO to hold talks with the secretary general of that organization. [end recording]

Meets With Juppe

LD2212042893 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0030 GMT 22 Dec 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Nikita Yermakov]

[Excerpt] Paris, 21 Dec—Azerbaijani President Geydar Aliyev, who is on a visit here, had a meeting with French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe on 21 December. The sides discussed the development of Russo-French relations and the settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. [passage omitted]

Holds News Conference

LD2212044193 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 2330 GMT 21 Dec 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent]

[Text] Paris, 22 Dec—I am extremely satisfied with the progress and the results of my visit to France, said Azerbaijani President Geydar Aliyev speaking at a news conference held here on the evening of 21 December.

Useful meetings and talks took place during the visit, he continued. Of particular significance was my meeting with French President Francois Mitterrand, the signing of the agreement on friendship, mutual understanding, and cooperation, and a fruitful conversation with French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe.

During the talks with the president and the foreign minister, the head of Azerbaijan continued, we discussed the development of relations between the two countries and the settlement of the conflict situation in our region. We agreed that France would facilitate a peaceful settlement of the issue.

We advocate a peaceful solution to ending the military aggression against Azerbaijan, provided that Armenia withdraws its armed formations from the Azerbaijani regions it seized, and the inviolability of Azerbaijani borders and its territorial integrity, Geydar Aliyev stressed. At the same time, we are aware of the need to resolve the Nagorno-Karabakh issue. Of great importance is the fact that both the president and the foreign minister of France reasserted the international principles of the inviolability of borders, the unacceptability of violence against other states and military intrusion, and the observance of the territorial integrity of every state, including Azerbaijan.

The president said that along with the establishment of close relations between the leaders of the two countries, the visit to France has made it possible to lay the basis for the further development of bilateral relations. This is very important for a better representation of Azerbaijan in France. We will do our utmost to effectively maximize the existing opportunities for developing comprehensive cooperation with France.

Armenia Said Pursuing Expansion To Gain Resources

LD2112183893 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1438 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] A spokesman for Azerbaijan's president has accused Armenia of expansion in an attempt to seize Azerbaijan's natural wealth.

The spokesman's statement, a copy of which is in Interfax's possession, notes that Azerbaijan's raw materials have always been in Armenia's focus, which is born out by publications by Armenian authors in Soviet times. In these writings, such Azerbaijani deposits as the Isti-Su mineral water springs, the Dashkesan iron ore mines, and the Kelbajar gold mines were arbitrarily regarded as Armenia's natural resources.

The statement says that the significance of the raw material factor in Armenia's policy of expansion found its expression after the Zangezuri region (now under Armenia's control), populated predominantly by Azerbaijanis, had been torn away from Azerbaijan in 1920. For years, major deposits of copper and molybdenum, lead, zinc, and gold have been mined there. In fact, the statement goes on to say that Zangezuri's natural wealth made up the basis of Armenia's non-ferrous metallurgy. "Zangezuri's experience" was applied to the Kelbajar region of Azerbaijan, where in the 70s "under protection from its lobby in the former Soviet leadership, Armenia began to prospect for minerals in "disregard of the Azerbaijani government's warning."

Since 1976, the "Armzoloto" association has been extensively extracting gold in the Kelbajar region, where 27.6 tons of gold were extracted in 1989. The bulk of this amount must belong to Azerbaijan. Despite repeated warnings from the Azerbaijani government, mining has been continuing up until now.

Guliyev Sees 'Qualitative Changes' in Army

LD2112145793 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1147 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Chairman of the Azerbaijani parliament, Rasul Guliyev, declared that the "heroic" defense of the republic's Beilagan region testifies to qualitative changes in the Azerbaijani army.

In his televised address Monday, Guliyev pointed out that "results of the tense activity of the leadership aimed at the defense of the country and strengthening its combat efficiency has started to bring the first results."

The parliament's chairman reported that "firmness" of the Azerbaijani detachments "aroused panic" among the Armenian formations which attempted to organize an offensive against the Beilagan region. In his words, after the defeat the Armenian command "hastily asked for a 10-day truce." This truce, Guliyev said, was concluded under the mediation of the Russian party. It is in force until December 26.

In Guliyev's opinion, the Armenian party attempted to subject Azerbaijan "to a new military blackmail," having endeavored an offensive against Beilagan on the eve of a new stage of talks to settle the conflict scheduled for December 21 in Finland.

Nevertheless, Azerbaijan's Defense Ministry reported to Interfax that several populated centers in the Beilagan region had been subjected to fire over the previous 24 hours from Armenian positions.

A well informed source in the office of the Azerbaijani president asserts that according to Azerbaijani intelligence information, 10 units of armored vehicles have been transferred to the border of the Beilagan region from Armenia. Due to this, Azerbaijan's military experts express the opinion that the Armenian command is trying to use this 10-day truce to prepare a new offensive against the Beilagan region.

Meanwhile, last Friday Stepanakert declined the assertions of the Azerbaijani sources about an offensive by the Karabakh forces against the Beilagan region. A statement distributed by the Information and Press Department of the self-proclaimed Nagorno-Karabakh republic says that trench warfare was going on at the southeastern section of the front. It has not, however, affected the disposition of forces.

Battlefield Successes, Negotiation Efforts Pursued

PM2212122793 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 22 Dec 93 First Edition p 6

[Arif Useynov report: "Azerbaijan Wages War and Thinks of Peace"]

[Text] Baku—Hostilities in the Beylagano-Agdzhabedinskiy sector have been raging for a second week. Relative calm on this section of the front was destroyed by Armenian armed formations, which subjected the populated areas of Ter-Terskiy Rayon to a massive concentration of fire. At the same time, there was an attempt to break through defenses at Beylagany, where there is a high density of large refugee camps. Occupying forces tried to seize the villages of Dzhangulu, Beytepe, and Karagultepe after advancing 2.5 km into the heart of the region.

The purpose of the attack was to sow panic among the refugee camps and to foist unacceptable terms on Azerbaijan. The republic's Defense Ministry, reporting sparingly on the hostilities, highlighted the main point: The Armenian National Army's concentrated attack has been quelled. Azerbaijani Commander in Chief and President Geydar Aliyev visited the combat zone. Evaluating the situation at a meeting with combat region leaders and subunit troop commanders, the head of state noted that the aggressor has been given a worthy rebuff along the entire front line, incurring losses both of personnel and hardware. Dwelling in more detail on defense provision, he made particular note of the perceptible crisis in the national army's fighting spirit.

Commercial banks have paid out the promised compensation: 250,000 manats for every tank destroyed. Reports are also coming in of the destruction of missile launchers, armored vehicles, and long-range guns. The toll of dead servicemen for Armenia has hit 300. The Armenian side has requested a 10-day truce to remove the dead and the wounded from the battlefields.

It is highly pertinent that G. Aliyev, having given a positive appraisal of work relating to the formation of volunteer battalions and their combat training, called on Armenia's leaders to withdraw their troops from Azerbaijan unconditionally. On the other hand, the head of state continues to cooperate actively with international organizations in finding a peaceful solution to the Karabakh problem. Republic parliamentarians will submit a proposal to leave Azerbaijani lands voluntarily at a meeting with representatives of the Armenian Parliament scheduled to take place on Finland's Aland Islands under the mediation of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Russian side is to be represented by Vladimir Kazimirov, an authorized spokesman for the Russian president.

To all appearances, Armenia will send its foreign minister to Paris for talks with his Azerbaijan colleague Gasan Gasanov, who arrived there as part of a government delegation led by Azerbaijan's President Geydar Aliyev. As G. Aliyev noted before leaving Baku, Azerbaijan attaches major political significance to the establishment of interstate relations and the signing of a treaty on friendship and cooperation.

During talks between the presidents of France and Azerbaijan, foreign observers believe, the situation in Karabakh will also be examined. On arriving in Paris, G. Aliyev, at a meeting with representatives of the Azerbaijani community in France, urged the compatriots to proffer help to the motherland and to set up a powerful Azerbaijan lobby in Europe. Very great significance is also attached to the talks with the leadership of France's largest oil concern, Elf Aquitaine. It is quite possible that Azerbaijan will invite this concern to take part in developing oil deposits on the Caspian shelf.

Guliyev, Gasanov Discuss Refugees, Ties With Iran

NC1812080493 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 7 Dec 93 p 2

["Exclusive" interview with Parliament Speaker Rasul Guliyev and Foreign Minister Gasan Gasanov by an unidentified correspondent "during their recent visit to Tehran"]

[Text] [JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] How do you assess the political and economic situation in Azerbaijan now that the Aliyev government has assumed power?

[Guliyev] The elections took place in a democratic manner, and Geydar Aliyev was elected president by more than 98 percent of the people. He is now busy organizing the country's affairs. He is seeking solutions to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and is also involved in implementing economic reforms. You know that Azerbaijan is burning in the conflagration of Armenian aggression. In any case, the situation will not continue for long. From an economic point of view and because of its location, Azerbaijan has the capability and prowess to resolve these matters and to liberate its territories from the aggressors.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] Recently, the Russian foreign minister presented a plan for military support for the Russians residing in the former Soviet Union republics. This proposal has encountered reaction in the newly independent republics. What do you think about this?

[Guliyev] Yes, this issue was propounded by Russia at a meeting; that is, that a peacekeeping force that would remain in the areas where the conflict is raging should be established. This force could intervene in order to safeguard security, like the UN peacekeeping forces. Most of the countries did not accept the Russian request. Azerbaijan would only accept this force within the framework of a peacekeeping force in which the Turkish and Iranian forces also participate, because Azerbaijan has three neighbors: Iran, Russia, and Turkey.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] Only Russia is mentioned in this plan.

[Guliyev] I think Mr. Aliyev will be able to answer this question, because he attended that meeting.

[Gasanov] At that meeting, the issue of the Russian forces was debated, but no consensus was reached. The only issue that was agreed upon at this session was that discussion on this subject should continue. But according to the understanding achieved at this session, every government would be permitted to use the peacekeeping forces on the condition that the signatory governments oversee these operations.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] What measures have been envisaged to rectify the difficult conditions prevailing in the Azerbaijani refugee camps?

[Guliyev] The Azerbaijani Government has housed the refugees in peaceful areas. I must mention that, with regard to the problems of accommodating the refugees and attending to their needs, the Iranian Government has provided immense assistance and has extended support to nearly a million refugees. However, the main issue is that the refugees should return to their homes as soon as possible. All the obstacles to their return to their cities and homes should be eliminated.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] Former governments signed oil agreements with foreign companies, and Aliyev's government recently signed some oil-trading accords with some foreign countries. What is the status of the earlier oil deals, and on what basis were the new accords signed?

[Guliyev] First of all, the agreements should be revamped to meet international standards. The Azerbaijani Government is not in favor of these agreements. They are one-sided and cater only to the interests of the other side, ignoring Azerbaijan's interests.

We are seeking to streamline these agreements while keeping Azerbaijan's interests in mind; that is, we should ensure that the agreements cater to the interests of both sides and that every agreement is approved by the parliament and made official.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] There were three plans being studied for the export of oil from Azerbaijan. Which of the three plans have been given greater importance by the present Azerbaijani Government?

[Guliyev] Importance has been given to the most important piping route for the export of Azerbaijani oil, which is—in our opinion—the Azerbaijan-Iran-Nakhichevan-Turkey-Black Sea route.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] It has been reported that there have been talks on this subject between Russia and the Azerbaijani Government. How much of this report is true?

[Gasanov] The former government did not have cordial relations with Iran, and a very unbalanced policy prevailed on the government level. There were no precise relations with Russia either. Nor did we have very specific relations with the European governments. Since Geydar Aliyev has assumed power, the new government has delineated and specified the new foreign policy of Azerbaijan and has given it a more lucid form within the framework of diplomatic relations.

During this short time, as you have witnessed, Iranian President Hashemi-Rafsanjani traveled to Azerbaijan, and officials of the two countries have visited Iran and Azerbaijan, respectively. This is a sign of the cordial relations between the two countries.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] What was the outcome of your visit to the Islamic Republic of Iran?

[Guliyev] Some economic, political, and cultural protocols [preceding word in English] were signed over the course of this visit, and it was agreed that some experts from Iran should visit Azerbaijan to assist us in setting up some of our industries. In any case, this visit will yield important gains in consolidating bilateral relations, and we are satisfied with it.

Opposition Head Says Country Should Leave CIS

MK2112120093 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 21 Dec 93 p 4

[Report by Mekhman Gafarly based on POSTFACTUM and INTERFAX material: "Opposition Demands Republic's Withdrawal From CIS. People's Front Members Arrested in Baku"]

[Excerpt] After Azerbaijan's joining the CIS failed to score positive results for Baku in the Armenian-Azeri conflict, the opposition has again raised its demand for Azerbaijan's withdrawal from the Commonwealth. This is mainly being insisted upon by major opposition political forces such as the People's Front and the Party of National Independence of Azerbaijan (PNIA). In an interview with a KHABAR-SERVICE correspondent, Nazim Imanov, PNIA deputy chairman, stated that "Azerbaijan should not have joined the CIS," and called on the Republic's leaders to rescind their decision on this matter.

In the opinion of Mr. Imanov, democratic forces in Azerbaijan should concentrate their efforts on three areas. First, it is necessary to oppose with all possible democratic methods Azerbaijan's accession to new treaties within the framework of the CIS which, in the words of Mr. Imanov, infringes upon state independence of the Republic. Second, to bring influence to bear on the country's leaders in a bid to make them "follow the road toward consolidating Azerbaijan's sovereignty." Third, the PNIA deputy chairman thinks that "public opinion both inside and outside the Republic should be prepared for the idea that Azerbaijan will leave the Commonwealth sooner or later." [passage omitted]

Arrested Popular Front Members Fined, Released

NC2112195793 Baku TURAN in English 1642 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Baku, December 21 (TURAN)—On December 20 the court of Sabail Region of Baku fined two employees of the newspaper "CUMHURRIYET". The fine amounts to 2,000 roubles.

It was reported that on December 18 two journalists, Gabil Rustamov and Mahir Mamedov who represent the newspaper of the Popular [People's] Front of Azerbaijan "CUMHURRIYET", were illegally arrested by the policemen. Due to their "insubordination to the police" they were taken to the regional Department of Police. For 40 hours they were kept in the ward of Sabail region, and Senior Lieutenant of Police, Ziyaddin Zeynalov, took the statement. Under this protocol, regional court fined both arrested.

Both journalists told TURAN that their arrest consisted of a political character.

"Our arrest once more demonstrates that the authorities continue persecute different-minded people".

Georgia

Russian Peacekeeping Offer Reportedly Rejected

MK2112111093 Moscow KURANTY in Russian 21 Dec 93 p 3

[Inga Agbarova report: "And What if They Ask a Third Time?"]

[Text] As our correspondent has learned from well-informed sources, Georgian Foreign Minister Aleksandr Chikvaidze, prior to his recent trip to Rome to attend a CSCE session, received an unofficial request apparently coming from the Russian top leadership to express a wish by the Georgian Government to grant the Russian

troops on Georgia's territory the status of peacekeeping forces. Chikvaidze, however, rejected the request. The sources also say that in his time E. Shevardnadze also turned down a similar request, literally several days before Sukhumi was surrendered. Apparently it is only intensified developments in the republic's western parts and a threat of a new wave of civil war that can force Georgia to comply with Russia's "request" and declare to the CSCE its wish to have peacekeeping forces on its territory with Russian flag markings on the soldiers' uniforms.

Mutual Recriminations Stall Talks With Abhazia

MK2112121093 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 21 Dec 93 p 1

[Liana Minasyan report in the "Negotiations" column: "The Georgians and the Abkhaz Cannot Come to Terms. Tbilisi Still Counts on Russia's Peacemaking Capacity"]

[Text] After the first Geneva round of the Georgian-Abkhaz talks, consultations were held in Moscow by experts on both sides who discussed, under the Geneva mandate, the concept for "a political status of Abkhazia as part of Georgia." Judging by the mood of Irakli Machavariani, head of the Georgian group, who also is deputy head of the Shevardnadze administration, the hopes that the Geneva talks will allow coordination of positions in any way are not being justified. The very first point under discussion—on separating the powers between the central authorities of Georgia and the Abkhaz authorities—caused a demarche on the part of the Abkhaz delegation. According to a statement from Prime Minister Dzhergeniya, present-day Abkhazia may not be considered as part of Georgia and their relations must be defined as relations of equals. The Georgian delegation in its turn cited five resolutions by the UN Security Council on the conflict in Abkhazia which include a provision on guarantees of Georgia's territorial integrity within the generally recognized borders. Moreover, the Georgian leadership has tasked its delegation to make a statement that as long as hostilities continue in Abkhazia against peaceful civilians—attacks on Georgian villages in the area of Kodori (nine villages were burned down)—any talks about Abkhazia's political status are premature. Georgia insists that first the refugees must be returned, humanitarian problems resolved, the dead buried, the prisoners of war exchanged, a search begun for those listed as missing, and the conflict zone demilitarized.

The problem of refugees from Abkhazia is threatening to become the main political issue because the Abkhaz authorities insist that the republic's status should be defined in a referendum. In the context of the broken "demographic status quo," Georgia, to put it mildly, is skeptical of the legitimacy of such an act. Moreover, the warring sides cannot reach even a stable cease-fire, and no one can provide guarantees of security for that part of the non-Abkhaz population who want to return home. Once, after the Sochi agreement was concluded, the Georgian authorities initiated the return of the refugees whose fate, following the failure of this ambitious project, proved to be tragic when Abkhaz troops captured Sukhumi. The Georgian leadership will hardly dare take this risk again. The sequence it is nonetheless proposing is this: return of the refugees, conduct of elections and creation of a kind of coalition government in Abkhazia. "From the very start the conflict has been an internal Abkhaz conflict which led to the creation of parallel power structures. This situation is abnormal and it must be resolved as a matter of urgency," Machavariani stated. "We shall support an authority which will be created on the basis of the will expressed by the entire population of Abkhazia and are ready to grant it a maximum volume of powers and rights within the framework of a single state."

And although on one point—the refugees issue—the positions of the sides are apparently identical, it is practically impossible to translate this into life in the context of the ongoing war.

Georgia is offering Abkhazia the status "of the broadest possible autonomy." Abkhazia raises the question of its full independence and considers the discussion of its status prior to a referendum as senseless. Four possible options of status are proposed for the referendum: autonomy, federation, confederation, or full independence.

Thus stated, the Abkhaz position has provoked a protest from the Georgian delegation; it concluded that thereby the Abkhaz disavowed their signature under the Geneva memorandum. "This is the fourth case in which we have witnessed bad faith on the part of our partner," said Teymuraz Stepanov, a member of the delegation and aide to Shevardnadze. "Beginning with September 1992, the Abkhaz have violated all the agreements. Now, too, we have no guarantees—there is only the hope for a Russian peacemaking mission, although it has once ended in a total collapse."

'Experts' Present Results

LD2112204893 Tbilisi CONTACT INFORMATION AGENCY in Russian 1730 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] [No dateline as received] "Notwithstanding the Abkhaz side's efforts to wreck the peaceful process of the settlement of the conflict in Abkhazia, a joint team of experts working out recommendations on a political statute of Abkhazia within Georgia has reached definite results." This was said at a news conference held at the Georgian Embassy in Moscow and dedicated to the results reached by the experts.

Draft propositions stipulating a statute of extensive autonomy within Georgia and including detailed account on the differentiation of authorities was presented by the Georgian side at the meeting.

According to the deputy head of the delegation, the deputy director of the head of state's staff, Irakli Machavariani, the Abkhazian side voiced an idea of

settling the issue through a referendum that would have to decide the issues of Abkhazia's autonomy within Georgia on the basis of federative or confederative relations or the declaration of Abkhazia as an independent state.

Representatives of Russia and CSCE taking part in the work of experts have determined their attitude toward the position of the parties. The UN and CSCE experts will present their conclusions to their organizations, which will prepare appropriate documents.

A statement of the Georgian delegation was read at the meeting stating that since combat activities against civilians continue in Abkhazia, any talks about the political statute of Abkhazia must be considered premature. The cessation of combat activities and ethnic cleansing and creation of condition for refugees to return were mentioned among measures capable of securing the implementation of the Geneva memorandum.

Abkhazia's Ardzinba Seeks Removal of Sanctions

LD2112200593 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1745 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Abkhazian Parliament Chairman Vladislav Ardzinba called on Russian leaders to lift the economic blockade of Abkhazia. "The multi-national people of Abkhazia suffering from war and hunger would be very grateful" for this step, says a telegram Ardzinba sent to Russian President Boris Yeltsin, Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin, and Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev.

Ardzinba argued that Abkhazia "faithfully adhered to" the pledges it made in the Georgian-Abkhazian talks in Geneva late in November and early in December 1994 [as received]. In particular, prisoners were exchanged on December 19 and, following a decision adopted by the presidium of the Abkhazian parliament, refugees began to return to the republic. The message emphasizes that "the hardships that are aggravated by the Russian economic blockade make restoration of normal life impossible. This is especially true of the return of refugees, notably tens of thousands of Russians that were banished by Georgian occupation authorities and took temporary shelter in Russia."

Ardzinba recalled that the Geneva memorandum which called on the international community for help in restoring peaceful life in Abkhazia was signed by a Russian representative.

Ministry Criticizes ITAR-TASS Over Report

LD2112183593 Tbilisi Radio Tbilisi Network in Georgian 1400 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] The CONTACT INFORMATION AGENCY reports that the press service of the Georgian Internal Affairs Ministry has released the following statement:

On 20 December, Russia's Ostankino television "Novost"i news program carried a report from the ITAR-TASS news agency quoting the B-S PRESS AGENCY, claiming that mass arrests of the ex-president's supporters were going on in Georgia. Since B-S PRESS had received this information from the press center of the Internal Affairs Ministry, we decided to contact the agency to be told that they had sent ITAR-TASS information of a totally different nature, but it was later distorted in a Russian [Ostankino] television report. In fact B-S PRESS had released the following story:

Police officers from the Chkhorotsku Rayon Commandant's Office have detained members of an illegal armed unit supporting the ex-president, (Koba Lagvilava), (Aleksandre Sichinava), [name indistinct], and a former convict, (Roland Shelia). Three automatic machineguns, [words indistinct] 90 cartridges, a hand grenade, and an automobile that the bandits had stolen in the town of Poti were confiscated.

After preliminary questioning, the criminals admitted that they had carried out armed attacks on the families of Chkhorotsku Rayon inhabitants, (Kvitaia), (Shengelaia), (Darsalia), and (Sajaia).

Today, when a relentless struggle against criminal elements is under way, when it is already possible to notice gradual improvement and positive moves toward the unity of the nation, when the republic's leadership has guaranteed full immunity and freedom to members of illegal armed units supporting the ex-president, if they surrender arms voluntarily [words indistinct], the ITAR-TASS news agency's information, which is in fact disinformation, is totally confusing.

The above-mentioned agency is attempting to present bandits as politicians, while the selfless work of law enforcement bodies aimed at restoring stability in the republic is being presented as political score-settling.

Therefore, we request all information agencies check and verify all their crime stories with the leadership of the republic's Interior Ministry or its press center, as do Georgian television and other reliable media.

Shevardnadze, Party Promise Aid to Entrepreneurs

LD2112182093 Tbilisi Radio Tbilisi Network in Georgian 1400 GMT 21 GMT 93

[Text] Problems of Georgian economy and the necessity to establish and strengthen state-owned and private firms comprised the subject matter of a meeting arranged by the leadership of the Union of Georgia's Citizens with Georgian businessmen. In an informal setting at the Tbilisi business club, representatives of entrepreneurs from various towns of the republic, Adzharia and Abkhazia, along with members of the government and employees of the Georgian head of state's staff discussed problems facing businessmen and the role of the latter in the development of market economy.

Speaking at the meeting, Eduard Shevardnadze, chairman of the Georgian parliament and head of state, said the Union of Georgia's Citizens had planned a series of meetings like this with representatives of various spheres living in Georgia. The first of these was held with businessmen because neither the democratic development of the country nor an increase in the standard of living was possible unless market economy developed and all forms of property strengthened.

Everything new requires special attention and support and the Union of Georgia's Citizens will do its best to create conditions for the development of Georgian entrepreneurship. It is necessary to adopt a packet of appropriate laws and conduct an overall struggle for the establishment of law and order without which businessmen will not be able to work.

We have to strengthen our relations with foreign countries because entrepreneurship will have no chance to develop in isolation. Georgia has good relations with virtually all European countries and the United States. As soon as the situation in the country becomes stable, big business of primarily Germany, England, the United States will rush here. This will provide Georgian businessmen with an excellent opportunity to find partners.

The head of state pointed out that Georgia's joining the CIS had been significantly conditioned by its interest in the revival and development of its economy. Neither this could be achieved in the isolation.

Georgian businessmen have to play a significant role in the restoration of broken links with the republics of the former Soviet Union. Many of them operate successfully in Russia, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine, and they will undoubtedly provide help to their fellow countrymen.

Russia To Supply Power, Cash To Ease Energy Crisis

LD2112135593 Tbilisi Radio Tbilisi Network in Georgian 0800 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Following Georgia's entry into the CIS, Russia will start to supply us with several million kilowatt-hours of electricity a day by the end of this year. In order to do this, forces have been mobilized to repair damaged sections of the Kavkasioni power line on the territory of the Karachayevo- Cherkesskaya Autonomous Republic. As is known, several pylons on this power line have been damaged in acts of sabotage.

At the same time, Georgia has received from Russia more than 10 billion rubles to overcome its energy crisis. This sum will be used to buy fuel for the Tbilisi hydroelectric plant. Operating the Tbilisi plant at full capacity will enable us to save the resources of all our hydroelectric stations before the spring floods.

Shevardnadze Comments

LD2112203293 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1800 GMT 21 Dec 93

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature; by correspondents Andrey Pershin, Andrey Petrovskiy and Vladimir Shishlin, edited by Boris Grishchenko]

[Text] Georgian leader Eduard Shevardnadze hopes that the arrival of U.S., British and Australian oil prospectors in 1994 will help the country accumulate a certain stock of energy resources for emergency situations.

In a televised interview, he said "we will be able to somewhat alleviate the problem of lighting, heating and shortage of aircraft fuel."

On the current energy crisis, Shevardnadze said the country's economy would have collapsed but for imports of Turkmenian gas. In the meantime, he put the country's combined debt to Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan for gas transit to Georgia at about $30 Mn. He hopes to be able to ease the problem during a two-day CIS summit due to open in Ashgabat on Thursday.

IF [INTERFAX] note: Georgia's power grid is no longer switched on to those of Russia, Armenia and Azerbaijan. The main power generating units at the country's large Inguri hydroelectric station are now out of order because of manpower shortages while its counterpart in Tbilisi is under constant repair. Electricity lines and sub-stations, some of them in Tbilisi itself, often fall victim to sabotage attacks.

One other trouble is the scant food supply. On Monday, Shevardnadze approved a plan for imports of 700,000 tons of grain from Kazakhstan with the Finance Ministry instructed to provide the appropriate funds in next year's budget. Relevant ministries and departments have been ordered to carry it out.

The government also is depending on international relief aid to help resolve the country's food shortage. In the meantime, U.N. official for humanitarian aid Pierre Orloff, now in Tbilisi, called on the West for a substantial review of the aid program for Georgia if it really meant to help that Transcaucasian republic.

The West must help Georgia build food processing plants and provide advanced farm technologies instead of restricting itself to relief aid in basic foodstuffs, he told Interfax.

Although it is early yet to speak of tourism as the most promising area of western investment, says Orloff, it will not be long before that happens.

The U.N. official says transport routes are another area of western investment. Having three seaports on the Black Sea coast, Georgia can help bridge East and West, he said.

Estonia

Diplomat Predicts Suspension of Troop Withdrawal

WS2112124693 Tallinn ETA NEWS BULLETIN in English 0823 GMT 21 Dec 93

[From 21 December POSTIMEES, p 1]

[Text] Tuesday, December 21—Russia may suspend the withdrawal of its troops from Estonia and Latvia in the near future, Russian Foreign Ministry Baltic affairs coordinator Alexander Udaltsov said. He claimed that Estonia and Latvia intend to repeat the Lithuanian example of withdrawal without definite obligations for either side. Russia intends to use a "realistic policy" towards the Baltic states and will apply "adequate measures" in case the Baltic states should not accept its interests. Udaltsov cited the Latvian refusal to maintain the Russian presence in the Skrunda radar station for six more years as an example of "lack of minimum consideration of Russian interests." He warned that the question of new withdrawal terms will be automatically cancelled unless Latvia would change its positions.

The Russian extremist politician Vladimir Zhirinovsky supports the protest of the Russian Community in Estonia against the government policy on residence permits to retired foreign military personnel, Russian Liberal Democratic Party member Pyotr Rozhok announced. According to him, Zhirinovsky had promised "negative results" for the Estonian Government, should the policy be realised.

Arms Purchase Contract With Israel Ratified

PM2112151393 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 21 Dec 93 p 3

[Report by Valeriy Gromak: "Will Belligerence Grow with Israeli Weapons?"]

[Text] The Estonian State Assembly ratified on second reading a contract between the republic government and an Israeli firm on the purchase of weapons. As KRASNAYA ZVEZDA reported earlier, the sides signed the contract 7 January. Consignments of weapons will be arriving in Estonia until the end of 1995. The deal is worth around $60 million and Tallinn officials have until the year 2000 to pay. Estonia has acquired from Israel army and police firearms, modern antitank systems, and armaments for air defense systems.

"When the bulk of the weapons has arrived (and that will be in a year's time) Estonia will be able to offer considerable resistance to a potential enemy," Parliamentary Defense Commission Chairman Rein Helme said.

Volunteers Accepted for Peacekeeping Battalion

WS2112124493 Tallinn ETA NEWS BULLETIN in English 0823 GMT 21 Dec 93

[From 21 December POSTIMEES, HOMMIKULEHT, p 3,2]

[Text] Tuesday, December 21—National defence offices are accepting applications for serving in the Baltic joint peacekeeping battalion since Monday [20 December]. The Estonian volunteers are to form one company of the battalion. The candidates are expected to have a command of English and will pass primary training at the Kuperjanov Infantry Battalion. The company is to consist of approximately 100 men, who will be paid according to the UN regulations. While the official language of the battalion will be English, the training is to be conducted in Estonian. The Baltic volunteers will not be used for operations in the former Soviet Union.

Defence Minister Jri Luik admitted that the preparations are expected to take a long time and the battalion is unlikely to be ready in 1994. But Estonia may complete its company before that term in order to offer it for the Nordic countries peacekeeping forces, he added. Luik stressed that the UN is expected to support the idea of the Baltic battalion and it would also improve the Baltic states' positions in the UN.

Lithuania

Prime Minister Slezevicius Arrives in Poland

LD2112192593 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 1500 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] A Lithuanian Democratic Labor Party delegation, led by Adolfas Slezevicius, its chairman and Lithuanian prime minister, arrived in Warsaw today at the invitation of Aleksander Kwasniewski, the chairman of the Polish Social Democratic Party.

ELTA reports that the delegation also includes Finance Minister Eduardas Vilkelis, Transport Minister Gintautas Zintelis, and Deputy Foreign Minister Vladislovas Domarkas. It was noted at a meeting between Adolfas Slezevicius and his delegation with Aleksander Kwasniewski, that the Lithuanian Democratic Labor Party and Polish social democrats will apply their efforts to see that the Interstate Treaty of Good-Neighborliness is prepared and signed as soon as possible, and cooperation is developed in all spheres of life. There is no need to live in the past, said the participants in the meeting, but it is essential to find compromises that will bar the way to all political speculations. There are hotheads both in Lithuania and in Poland, said Adolfas Slezevicius. According to him, Lithuania and Poland have many points of contact, and it is not normal that Poland occupies only sixth place in Lithuania's trade balance.

Aleksander Kwasniewski described Poland's political situation after the parliamentary elections, and noted

that the Lithuanian syndrome of left-wing forces has found a response in Poland, too. Speaking of the left-wing forces victory, the chairman of the Polish Social Democratic Party listed four reasons for this phenomenon: The economic situation, the loss of touch with the people by the Solidarity elite, [word indistinct], the aggressive part played by the Church, and the style of implementing policy. The electors have rejected the concepts of political aggression and harsh treatment of historical past.

In the Sejm, Adolfas Slezevicius and his entourage met Sejm Speaker Jozef Oleksy. It was stressed that the aims and strivings of both countries were very similar.

Adolfas Slezevicius had to meet Polish Prime Minister Waldemar Pawlak during the afternoon. Important documents (?are to be signed) during the visit. The greatest interest of Polish society is aroused by the Interstate Treaty. Ninety five percent of its text has been coordinated. So far, views differ on the issues linked with the Polish minority in Lithuania and the Lithuanian minority in Poland.

Invites Pawlak, Kwasniewski

LD2112213593 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 2100 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Lithuanian Prime Minister Adolfas Slezevicius has invited the chairman of the Polish Council of Ministers, Waldemar Pawlak, to visit Lithuania in January. This was announced at a news conference today after an almost one-hour meeting of the two heads of governments, ELTA [Lithuanian news agency] reports.

Adolas Slezevicius told journalists that his visit in Warsaw was very useful and concrete. Discussions took place on improvement of the work of the border crossing points, export of electric power from Lithuania through Poland to the west, the construction of the Via Baltica road, and the possibilities of gas import from the North Sea to the Baltic states. A great deal of attention was paid to the preparation of the bilateral inter-state treaty. The Lithuanian premier stressed that an important step forward was made today. He expressed the hope that this important document will be signed in January.

The chairman of the Lithuanian Democratic Labor Party has invited Aleksander Kwasniewski, chairman of the Polish Social Democratic Party, Aleksander Kwasniewski, to visit Lithuania. Satisfaction was expressed at the news conference at cooperation between the two parties.

Prime Minister Adolfas Slezevicius and his entourage left for Lithuania in the evening.

Jursenas Gives Polish Visit Positive Appraisal

AU2112132093 Warsaw PAP in English 2044 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] Vilnius, Dec. 20—Head of the Lithuanian parliament Ceslovas Jursenas expressed satisfaction with his recent visit to Warsaw and stressed once again at a press conference here that the Polish-Lithuanian treaty can be signed before the end of this year.

To achieve this, Jursenas said, several paragraphs of the treaty would have to be rephrased to eliminate to-date controversies. He pointed out that Lithuania, like Poland, wants to have a very good treaty but if it were to be impossible, it is better to have a little worse one than none at all.

Jursenas denied reports of the Lithuanian TV news programme "Panorama" that he was given a cool reception in Poland and stressed that his visit proved the Polish authorities' great interest in relations with Lithuania.

When asked about his conversation with Confederation for an Independent Poland (KPN) leader Leszek Moczulski about ethnic minorities, Jursenas replied that he had the best contact with Moczulski as the KPN leader's expectations in this field are reasonable in relation to both the Polish community in Lithuania and the Lithuanian minority in Poland.

Sees Need for Improving Relations

WS2112130193 Tallinn BNS in English 1750 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] Vilnius, Dec 20, BNS—Lithuanian Parliament Chairman does not lose hope that Lithuania and Poland will soon conclude an agreement on friendship and cooperation.

He said both sides realize the need to improve bilateral relations in the face of the latest developments in Russia.

During his two-day visit to Poland last week, Jursenas suggested the Polish side to conclude the agreement before the New Year's or early next year because "times and events compel to solve certain things without any delay."

In order to speed up the process, Lithuania proposed to leave out some disputed paragraphs, including a reciprocal engagement to return works of art, agreements on the preservation of cemeteries and monuments and on spelling names in passports and other documents.

At a press conference Monday [20 December], the parliament chairman said the proposal does not cover the historical interpretation of the 1920 annexation of Vilnius by Poland. A search for a compromise between "our radical and Polish anemic" positions goes on, he said.

Lithuania previously suggested to move history from the main agreement to a separate declaration and to sign both documents simultaneously, but the Polish side rejected the proposal. Jursenas said if a compromise cannot be found, the failure should be openly stated, because "it is possible to manage without a political agreement."

The parliament chairman declined to draw any conclusions about Warsaw's "clearly reserved" policy with

respect to Lithuania, which supposedly manifests itself in Polish Prime Minister Waldemar Pawlak's decision to postpone his scheduled meeting with Jursenas and in delayed visits of Polish officials to Lithuania.

"It would be nice if the exchange of visits would be mutual, but it is not our fault that premiers change so often in Poland." Jursenas said he invited Pawlak to Vilnius and expressed certitude that Lithuanian Prime Minister Adolfas Slezevicius will do the same during his scheduled visit to Poland Tuesday.

Brazauskas Supports Oil Terminal With Latvians

WS2112132693 Tallinn BNS in English 1837 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] Vilnius, Dec 20, BNS - Lithuanian President Algirdas Brazauskas supports intentions to cooperate with Latvia in building an oil terminal on the territory of a former Soviet navy base in the Latvian seaport of Liepaja.

In his regular Monday [20 December] radio spot this week, Brazauskas said a terminal in Liepaja would cost considerably less compared to the Lithuanian terminal project and would allow to unite Lithuanian and Latvian financial resources. The president said Lithuania should carefully consider the opinion of Latvians, who are "very reserved about our decision."

Brazauskas claimed the opposition's warning that changing the place of the terminal would be useful to a third country in the East are "illogical and obscure."

Vytautas Landsbergis, leader of the parliament's rightist opposition, told reporters Monday that another six months or even a year would be lost if the place of the future terminal is changed, and Lithuania would still depend on Russia.

Brazauskas said he was surprised by the opposition's statement because the Baltic states make joint decisions, which are stronger and can be implemented faster.

Project Deadline Faced

WS2212113293 Tallinn BNS in English 1638 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Vilnius, Dec 21, BNS—If Lithuania and Latvia fail to agree before Jan. 15 on a basic scheme of building a joint oil terminal, Lithuania will continue work on its own terminal project, said Lithuanian Energy Minister Algimantas Stasiukynas.

In an interview with the leftist daily TIESA, Stasiukynas commented on a protocol of intentions, signed by Lithuanian and Latvian premiers last week, to possibly build a joint oil terminal in the Latvian seaport of Liepaja.

Lithuania wants to build an oil terminal as an alternative source of oil supplies and hopes to fully satisfy the demand for oil of the Mazeikiai oil refinery. Mazeikiai is able to refine up to 12 million tons of oil annually but currently receives only half of the amount.

The Jan. 15 deadline is indicated in the protocol. "If the initial documents are not ready, or we fail to agree before that time, the work in Butinge (the place chosen for the Lithuanian terminal) will be continued," Stasiukynas told the newspaper. The Ministry of Energy is responsible for the project on the Lithuanian side, while Latvia is represented by its Ministry of Energy and the government.

According to the protocol, Lithuania would own 51 percent of shares in the future terminal and Latvia would have a 49 percent shareholding.

According to the latest estimates, a terminal in Butinge would cost around 180 million U.S. dollars, while a terminal in Liepaja would be around 50 million dollars cheaper because the Latvian port already has a sea platform, Stasiukynas said. In Butinge, a platform would have to be built 9 kilometers off the coast.

The modern Liepaja project can be implemented much faster than the one in Butinge, the minister said.

Latvia earlier suggested to carry out the same project in the port of Ventspils, which is quite far away from the Mazeikiai refinery. Stasiukynas supposes that Latvians proposed Liepaja only after they were convinced that Lithuania is seriously engaged in its own terminal project.

The international community and international financial organizations implied several times earlier that they would welcome a joint Lithuanian-Latvian terminal project rather than a solely Lithuanian one.

Foreign Ministry Reviews Year's Events

LD2112174293 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 1500 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] A fair amount has been achieved by Lithuania in the sphere of foreign policy during this year. This is how the results of this year have been assessed by Minister of Foreign Affairs Povilas Gylys.

Recalling the most important events this year, he singled out Lithuania's admission to the Council of Europe, the withdrawal of the Russian Army, and the rapprochement with the European Community. In the minister's opinion, a turning point took place this year in relations with other Baltic states.

ELTA reports that at a news conference attended by other ministry officials and Lithuanian ambassadors, journalists were mostly interested in the point of view of the ministry and of diplomatic institutions regarding events in Russia. Replying to the question on whether Lithuania intends to revise its relations with Russia after the elections there, Povilas Gylys said that the results of the elections have not gone unnoticed and evaluations are being corrected.

Deputy Minister Albinas Jonuska stressed that the greatest concern arises not so much from Zhirinovskiy as a person as from the revanchism reviving in Russia. Our policy must be oriented in such a way that these tendencies do not increase, he said.

Lithuanian Ambassador to Russia Romualdas Kozyrovicius informed the journalists that at a meeting in the Russian Foreign Ministry he clearly stated that if Zhirinovskiy's threats to Lithuania continue in the Duma, they will not go unnoticed. The ambassador said he has not noticed any changes in Russia's foreign policy toward Lithuania or other Baltic states.

Lithuanian Ambassador to Washington Alfonsas Eidintas said that the United States is aware of the threat to the Baltic states asa result of the success of the revanchist forces in the Russian elections. This is shown by the fact that Alfonsas Eidintas, together with the Estonian ambassador, took part in the direct [words indistinct] where the results of the Russian elections were commented on.

President Addresses Diplomats' Meeting

LD2112201593 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 1600 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] An annual meeting of the heads of Lithuanian diplomatic missions opened at the Lithuanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs today. Its aim is to discuss foreign policy tasks, sum up this year's results, and examine tasks for the future. The meeting is attended by President Algirdas Brazauskas, many ambassadors, heads of other diplomatic institutions, officials at the presidency and the Seimas, and members of the government.

Foreign Minister Povilas Gylys noted that at present there are 20 Lithuanian embassies, six missions, several consulates-general, and one consulate. There are 17 honorary consuls.

Participants in the meeting were greeted by veteran diplomat, Stasys Backis, who devoted 60 years of his life to this work.

President Algirdas Brazauskas delivered a report entitled "Practical tasks linked with the realization of the Lithuanian Republic's foreign policy." The president noted that it is essential to create a system for Lithuania's institutions and diplomatic service to react to events in the world. In the opinion of Brazauskas, reaction must be more concrete and effective than now.

The president intends to discuss Lithuania's relations with NATO at the end of January in Brussels where a meeting of the NATO leaders is to take place. Algirdas Brazauskas categorically denied accusations that Lithuania is returning to the fold of Mother Russia and that secret talks are taking place with Russia. The president stressed that he is giving priority to the principle of flexible policy.

The conference of the Lithuanian diplomatic corps will go on for two days.

Minister Karazija on Farmers' Strike, Demands

WS2212093093 Vilnius TIESA in Lithuanian 7 Dec 93 No. 237 p 5

[Interview with Lithuanian Minister of Agriculture Rimantas Karazija by Algirdas Strumskis; place and date not given: "Eight Demands of the Strike Committee"; first three paragraphs are TIESA introduction]

[Text] Last Thursday [2 December], J. Ciulevicius, chairman of the Lithuanian Farmers' Union, stated in the morning radio program that the government has implemented only one of the eight points contained in a memorandum by the organizers of the strike. Farmers have declared December a month of preparations for the strike.

In the evening of the same day, I managed to meet with Minister of Agriculture Rimantas Karazija, chairman of the commission for the strike committee demands, and discussed the latter's eight demands.

"The current life of Lithuanian farmers and agrarian companies is not easy," said the minister putting the demands of the strike committee and other documents on the desk. "Prices for material and energy resources have ballooned like yeast, while procurement prices have climbed slowly. Food prices have increased enormously. The farmers' situation is aggravated by the fact that they are not paid for milk, meat, grain, and sugar beets on time. The farmers' demand that they be paid in due time is grounded."

[Karazija] We have talked to the members of the strike committee many times. Prime Minister A. Slezevicius has met with them more than once. We have been looking for ways of implementing their demands. In the beginning, these demands were more moderate, while now they have become categorical.

On 19 November, this memorandum was presented to the government. A commission has been set up to study its demands. It includes leaders of the Farmers' Union, the Agrarian Workers' Union, the Association of Agrarian Companies, the ministers of economy, finance, and trade and industry, leaders of trade unions and the Ministry of Agriculture, and some members of the Seimas [parliament] Agrarian Committee. We all met here in the ministry, discussed these issues, and made many points clear. Mr. Ciulevicius was also present. A draft protocol was submitted to Prime Minister A. Slezevicius. The latter approved the planned measures and issued a resolution on their due implementation.

Thus, when I heard Mr. Ciulevicius' explanations on the radio that only one demand has been implemented, while the remaining ones have not been satisfied, I would like to say the following to him. Mr. Ciulevicius

should understand the complicated situation in Lithuania. We will not meet all the demands until we overcome a deep crisis, and until our farmers acquire some experience under market conditions. We are not idling around but trying to ease this difficult situation.

[Strumskis] **Mr. Minister, let us take this protocol and look at the demands of the strike committee and the planned measures.**

[Karazija] **The first demand:** As of 1 December 1993, the government applies such economic measures as paying 30 cents per liter of second-rate milk, and 2.15 and 1.7-1.8 litai [Lt] per kilogram of cattle meat of high and medium fat content, respectively.

Last Wednesday, the commission held a meeting which was attended by the ministers of finance and economy and Mr. Ciulevicius. We also invited representatives of food processing enterprises. Quite a number of dairy plants are already paying 30 cents per liter of milk, while others are approaching this price. We suppose that this price will remain.

The meat of younger animals over 400 kilograms costs Lt2, and in some places even Lt2.10 or Lt 2.20 per kilogram. Representatives of meat processing plants said that they would pay Lt2.15 per kilogram of meat of high fat content. However, they demanded that this price be set by the government. We think that all interested groups—farmers, trade unions, and the Ministry of Agriculture—must reach an agreement. We will begin goodwill negotiations on this issue.

[Strumskis] **However, many milk and meat processing enterprises have become stock companies. The government cannot order them to buy cattle or milk at set prices. Orders would mean that we are returning to a planned economy which, I think, the Farmers' Union opposes.**

[Karazija] We cannot issue orders. If we do this, food prices will climb, and we will not sell the food anywhere. Then, we will have to grant subsidies. If one issues orders, one must also allot money. Such regulating is dangerous and it makes our economy disproportional.

There have also been demands to increase procurement prices for pork. Currently, meat processing enterprises are paying Lt4 per kilogram, while soon they will be paying Lt4.5. Procurement prices are real, although feed is more expensive in winter.

[Strumskis] **However, meat processing plants do not want to increase procurement prices. Why?**

[Karazija] The food that is not consumed on the domestic market must be sold in other states. If it becomes expensive, plants will lose the possibility of marketing it abroad. For example, if we ask more than $1 (over Lt4) per kilogram of beef, we will not sell it anywhere. Higher procurement prices would require subsidies, that is, lower prices for food exports, because otherwise farmers would find themselves in a very difficult situation.

I believe that we should primarily sell food products at lower prices on the domestic market. However, this is a different economic issue. There is a shortage of pork in Lithuania today. We must think how to feed our people. If the adopted budget allows any slightest subsidies, we will consult the farmers' organizations about their best utilization.

The second demand: By 31 December 1993, the government adopts procurement quotas for the mandatory state reserve at fixed prices.

We have agreed that the Ministry of Agriculture will set the quota of grain procurement for 1994 at 500,000 tonnes. Of this amount, 300,000 tonnes will be purchased by the end of 1994, while the remaining 200,000 tonnes—by 1 April 1995. We plan to pay 80 percent of the EC price. We have also agreed to draft procurement projects for 90,000 and 700,000 tonnes of meat and milk, respectively, and to discuss their prices and customs tariffs with representatives of the food processing industry and agrarian social organizations.

Farm produce will be bought through an agreement between the producer and the processing industry.

We have no experience in applying quotas. There are proposals to apply the German system of quotas. German subsidies are allocated not directly to farmers, but to food exports. This is how cheap products appear on the Lithuanian market, although in the EC they are much more expensive.

[Strumskis] **Why should our procurement prices approach those in the EC?**

[Karazija] We have begun a dialogue with the EC and would like to sign a free trade agreement with it. If the difference in prices is large, difficulties will arise, because we think that next year we will have quotas for the sale of our products in the EC countries. Of course, an equivalent amount of food products will reach Lithuania from the EC.

The third demand of the strike committee: To implement unconditionally the decisions of the government and the Lithuanian Bank concerning the due settlement of debts with farmers, and to impose unquestionable fines on debtors.

There are plans to amend the Seimas resolution of 20 May 1993, so that farmers are paid for their products within less than 18 days.

The debt of the meat processing industry to farmers is still large. However, in general, debts are diminishing, because more food products are being sold abroad. Representatives of Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan have arrived in Lithuania, and we are searching for possibilities of barter trade. There is no canned milk left in our storehouses. Even the dairy plant in Marijampole has almost no debts. However, we have difficulties with paying for sugar beets. We think that

sugar refineries will sign agreements on the sale of brown sugar. There are customers eager to buy Lithuanian sugar which is really good.

We suppose that the government and the Lithuanian Bank will manage to find possibilities for granting a 20-million-litai credit to the food processing industry to settle its debt with the farmers. We would use this money to buy grain and pay for sugar beets.

The fourth demand: To grant farmers the right to acquire no less than 50 percent of the stocks of food processing enterprises.

About 60 processing plants controlled by the Ministry of Agriculture and several dozens of enterprises set up by local self- governments are currently selling their stocks to farmers. However, not all of them have 50 percent of the stocks left. The Seimas adopted a law allowing food processing enterprises to use the profits for buying their stocks, and this is what they did. What is to be done now? Farmers who have privatized the assets of their agrarian companies and of the state have no investment coupons left to acquire the stocks of processing enterprises.

We have authorized the agrarian departments of local governments to protect the farmers' interests, so that the latter could buy such stocks. We are interested in more farmers joining the processing industry. An amendment is being drafted that will not allow the replacement of preferential stocks with nominal stocks for at least three years.

The fourth demand also requires that processing enterprises pay as much from their profits for the stocks designated to farmers as they pay their workers. However, neither the commission nor the government can authorize enterprises to buy stocks for farmers from their profits, if they earn any. This is against Lithuanian law. We are looking for other measures. I repeat, however, that we cannot force enterprises to do what the strike committee requires.

The fifth demand: To assign subsidies for fuel, lubricants, fertilizers, and electric energy from the budget.

Since the budget is still being debated in the Seimas, we cannot meet this demand. We will be able to speak about subsidies after the Seimas adopts the state budget. However, this does not satisfy the strike committee. Its members have agreed that we cannot discuss this issue until we know how much money we will have.

The sixth demand: Beginning in 1994, to grant preferential credits (with an 8 percent interest rate) to farmers.

The lowering of interest rates means that we will have to take this money away from someone else. The protocol of our commission states that as soon as the agrarian budget is ready it will provide for preferential credits with the interest rate not exceeding the bank margin (up to 8 percent).

The seventh demand: As of 1 December 1993, to exempt agrarian companies from the general excise duty for services rendered to their members.

The government satisfied this demand by adopting a relevant decision on 24 November 1993.

The eighth demand: The estimates of social benefits should not include the earnings received from two-or three-hectare individual land plots.

The commission has suggested that the Social Security Ministry, in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture, review social benefits for farmers and differentiate among incomes from individual land plots according to the latter's quality. This issue will be submitted to the government.

These are the eight demands of the strike committee, but we cannot meet all of them immediately. This will require several years. Our processing industry is outdated and it cannot be restructured rapidly. Many people suggest that the law on bankruptcy be applied straightaway. However, insolvency will not improve the situation. Certainly, bankruptcies will occur, but they will be controlled rather than spontaneous.

[Strumskis] Mr. Minister, thank you for your responses.